Papers, Original and Selected.

OUR PRINCIPLES: A REVIEW.

THIS is a day when the oldest truth is rarely accepted without as much scrutiny as if it were a recent discovery. Nothing being taken for granted, a rigid, and almost mathematical demonstration is demanded for the most elementary doctrines. In some cases, this, doubtless, springs from that earnest inquiry after truth which is so prominent a characteristic of our age. But, in too many instances, it is the offspring of that disguised scepticism which, whilst it professes to admire the character of Christ, denies his Divine mission, and so, Judas-like, betrays the "Son of Man with a kiss."

But, though this scrutiny of old truths is ofttimes carried to an excess anything but philosophic, yet still we are quite prepared to give up any recognised belief which cannot be demonstrated either by reason or by the higher principle of faith. Thus to things which are seen, and so can be measured by the intellect of man, we apply the test of reason; but to the things which are invisible, and which can only be known by revelation, we bow to the teachings of Scripture. For in spirituals we adhere to the wise dictum of Lord Bacon, and "give unto faith that which to faith belongeth": whilst in both cases we adopt the biblical canon, "*prove* all things" by their appropriate canons.

It is in connection with this modern tendency—from which even the church is not free—to doubt old truths, that we desire, at the opening of another year's campaign, to review the great cardinal principles upon which the Ragged School Union was founded a quarter of a century ago.

Nor is this task unnecessary. For a fierce battle is now waged in many quarters with our fundamental principle, that it is better for Christians to unite in fighting Satan than to expend their energies in fighting each other. Never, indeed, were the principles of true and false catholicity so brought face to face. Thus we have to front that false catholicity, the growth of the Roman marshes, which deems oneness in discipline and ritual to be essential to

salvation; whilst the other, wafted from Germany, asserts that the church of the future must include men who deny the saving truths of the Gospel, inasmuch as they affirm that true doctrine is of less importance than a good life. Opposed as these theories of catholicity seem to be at the first glance—the one being too narrow and the other too broad—they are after all but different phases of the same deadly heresy. For the one Deifies reason in the shape of the Church, and the other in the form of the opinions of fallible men.

We need scarcely intimate that on neither of these false theories of catholicity are the operations of the Ragged School Union based. From the direct teaching of Revelation we infer that oneness in Christ is of greater importance than oneness in church discipline. Thus the great aim of Ragged School managers is to lead Christian men of every section of the one Church to work solely for Jesus, rather than to waste time and strength in striving to enlarge the boundaries of their own society. This leads us to regard him as the most successful worker who brings the largest sheaf to Jesus, rather than he who can add the largest number of proselytes to his own communion. Like the noble Bible Society then, we are members of a great evangelical alliance, not merely recognising each other as brethren on the platform and then virtually ending with mere talk, but working together in the schoolroom (Phil. i. 27) "in one spirit, with one mind, striving *together* for the faith of the Gospel." For broad as is our platform, it is not broader than Scripture warrants, which affirms that (Gal. v. 6) "the faith which worketh by love" is of greater value than any outward rite. For though church forms may help to *build* up saved souls, it is the blood of Christ which alone can save.

This evolves another principle of the Ragged School Union, namely, that the points about which Christians differ are not equal in importance to those in which they agree. Mere union as workers in Christ's vineyard has educed this fact, apart from that direct teaching which marks Scripture. Thus in dealing with the souls of the outcast or the destitute, teachers are compelled to forget everything but Christ. What care our scholars for forms of church government or modes of public worship, when if they are aroused at all, their great question is this—Is there salvation for me? What must I do to be saved? The great Enemy may, indeed, strive to divert the teachers' energies to "questions which do not profit," but it is only at the sacrifice of their great vocation,

namely, to help Jesus to fill heaven. For, whilst we dispute, souls perish. Thus it is well known that Rome cares not how much we may dispute its heresies. But oh! how it trembles when, ignoring its pretensions, we solely *preach* justification by faith. As it was in the times of Wycliffe and Knox, so is it now. It is this fact which leads every wise Ragged School teacher to defer discussion of those minor points, which however important are not essential, in order that he may press home the greatest of all questions, Art thou saved? If thou diest *to-day*, wilt thou be in heaven *to-morrow?*

This fact leads to another leading principle of the Ragged School Union, namely, that no one is too vile for Jesus. This indeed is no new truth, happily, for it is as old as the sermon (Gen. iii. 15) preached by God in the garden of Eden. Yet, like many other biblical doctrines which are granted but not practised, for long years it was practically denied. Thus myriads of the waifs and strays of society descended into .the abyss which has no bottom, without hearing that there is a home and a hearty welcome for the vilest who will accept God's offer of mercy in Christ. But, by the grace of the Spirit, this great truth has been, so to speak, *unearthed;* and hence by means of Bible-class or Ragged church, many of God's moral lights have been kindled in the byways of our great cities. Hence, by the precious fruitage of Ragged Schools, it is seen that the Gospel is as powerful to reach the harlot as the moralist; nay, that the heart of the one is ofttimes more sensitive to the tale of Divine love than that of the other. Thus the last convert of our Divine Master was a robber; and happily in these our days we have heard ex-pugilists and burglars preach the Gospel with a power which is akin to that of apostolic times.

These facts evolve another principle of the Ragged School Union, viz., that the Gospel is not yet worn out. Now there are men who *hint*, if they do not broadly affirm, that, as Judaism did for the Hebrew race, so Christianity suited the dark ages; but that man, from his rise in intelligence, now needs something higher and nobler—the outcome of his own intuitions. This notion finds its chief vent in the writings of Comte and F. W. Newman—the former of whom, in imitation of Cain, invented a religion which he called the "religion of humanity." By this novel creed, the world is to be regenerated by ignoring the Godhead; and the selfishness which dominates and defaces society is to be cured by the worship of self. This indeed is but the old lie of Satan decked in a

modern dress, "ye shall be as Gods!" And to what can it tend but the worship of anti-Christ? (Rev. xiii. 8.)

But, happily for the destinies of the world, Christianity is neither worn out nor does it show any signs of the decrepitude of age. In fact, some of its richest trophies have been won during the present century. In proof of this we need but glance at the annals of Ragged Schools. Myriads, through their agency, of the vilest of the vile, have been reclaimed, and now employ brain and sinew in working out the great destinies of the Anglo-Saxon race. Bred in sin, they attained a manhood of crime, so that society, for its own safety, would have hunted them from earth as so much vermin. Yet, when man and woman, rendered heroic by faith, stormed den and hovel, with the "Sword of the Spirit," for their only weapon—it was soon found that that wild human soul could be trained by Christian kindness, whom the bars of a jail failed to intimidate. Thus instances without number might be cited to confirm the truth that, instead of Christianity being effete, some of its richest trophies are now being won in the haunts of vice and crime. And in proportion, as believers are led to obey their Master's injunction, and to go out into highway and byway to seek the lost, so will it be seen that the Gospel has the same innate vigour as when Paul preached his marvellous sermon to the disciples of Plato and Diogenes on Mars Hill.

This leads us to indicate another principle of the Ragged School Union—namely, that the Gospel can do more for society than Government. At best civil government can only *keep down* its ill-regulated members; and thus its organisation necessarily savours more of terror than of love. Even as respects education, it can only test and pay for secular results. Measuring the extent of secular attainments, it cannot possibly gauge those moral or spiritual results on which the existence of society depends. But it is in these features that Ragged Schools are so pre-eminent that without them they might vanish from the schemes of philanthropy without being missed. For, if Ragged School teachers have any special work which distinguishes them from other teachers, it is in this, that they are missionaries to destitute or outcast children. Their work doubtless has a valuable reflex influence on society; for the very work which Government cannot accomplish—namely, to civilise the "roughs"—is the very work Ragged Schools undertake, and are recognised to have performed. Thus, whilst they devote their energies to save souls, black with sin and despair, it is

seen that, for every one they bring to Jesus, they add another good member to society. Thus society is indebted to Ragged Schools, for much of its safety and prosperity; for we may be assured that none will so well do their duty to society as those who have first learnt their duty to God.

We have thus reviewed the principles on which the Ragged School Union is based: and we think sufficient proofs have been adduced to show that, what is true in principle, has been found equally right in practice. Happy is it in a day when so many are led astray by a *mirage* of unity, that there are those who find in Christ the true centre of union. For them no "Œucumenical Council" is needed; for they have already found the true centre of unity in the person of Christ, and in consequent united labour to complete the body of Jesus.

Nor are they without a glorious reward. For *now* they exemplify the prayer of Jesus that "they may all be one," whilst at the same time they but antedate that glorious time when there shall be visible as well as invisible union (Isaiah lii, 8); "They shall see eye to eye when Jehovah shall bring again Zion." Above all they now meet on the same broad platform—union with Jesus, and so oneness with the brethren—which they will occupy when the Bridegroom claims his bride at the marriage supper. Well then, when we review our principles, may we echo the words of the Christian bard—

Our brotherhood's a circle stretching wide,
Around one fount, although a sea divide:
With fathers who behold the Lord in light,
With saints unborn who shall adore his might.
With brothers who the race of faith now run,
In union and communion we are one.

Not by a party's narrow walls confined,
Not by the sameness of opinions joined,
But saved alike by the Redeemer's blood,
And bound together in the heart of God!

And when the fleeting day of time is past,
This fellowship divine shall ever last;
Then will the world, the sight admiring, see
The Church in glory and in *unity!*

"SO MANY CALLS."

BY MRS. H. BEECHER STOWE.

It was a brisk, clear evening in the latter part of December, when Mr. A—— returned from his counting-house to the comforts of a bright coal fire and warm arm-chair, in his parlour at home. He changed his heavy boots for slippers, drew around him the folds of his evening gown, and then, lounging back in the chair, looked up to the ceiling and about with an air of satisfaction. Still there was a cloud on his brow: what could be the matter with Mr. A——? To tell the truth, he had that afternoon, in his counting-room, received the agent of one of the principal religious charities of the day, and had been warmly urged to double his last year's subscription; and the urging had been pressed by statements and arguments to which he did not know well how to reply. "People think," soliloquised he to himself "that I am made of money, I believe. This is the fourth object this year for which I have been requested to double my subscription; and this year has been one of heavy family expenses, building and fitting up this house, carpets, curtains—no end to the new things to be bought. I do not see really, how I am to give a penny more in charity. Then, there are the bills for the boys and girls: they all say they must have twice as much now as before we came to this house:—wonder if I did right in building it?" And Mr. A—— glanced unceasingly up and down the ceiling, and around on the costly furniture, and looked into the fire in silence. He was tired, harassed, and sleepy; his head began to swim, and his eyes closed. He was asleep. In his sleep he thought he heard a tap at the door; and there stood a plain, poor-looking man, who, in a voice singularly low and sweet, asked for a few moments' conversation with him. Mr. A—— asked him into the parlour, and drew him a chair near the fire. The stranger looked attentively around, and then turning to Mr. A—— presented him with a paper. "It is your last year's subscription to missions," said he, "you know all the wants of that cause which can be told you; I came to see if you had anything more to add to it."

This was said in the same low and quiet voice as before; but for some reason, unaccountable to himself, Mr. A—— was more embarrassed by the plain, poor, unpretending man, than he had been in the presence of anyone before. He was for some moments silent before he could reply at all, and then, in a hurried and embarrassed manner, he began the same excuses which had appeared so satisfactory to him the afternoon before—the hardness of the times, the difficulty of collecting money, family expenses, &c.

The stranger quietly surveyed the spacious apartment, with its many elegancies and luxuries, and without any comment, took from the merchant the paper he had given, but immediately presented him with another.

"This is your subscription to the Tract Society: have you anything to add to it? You know how much it has been doing, and how much more it now desires to do, if Christians would only furnish means. Do you not feel called upon to add something to it?"

Mr. A—— was very uneasy under this appeal; but there was something in the still, mild manner of the stranger that restrained him; but he answered, that though he regretted it exceedingly, his circumstances were such that he could not this year conveniently add to any of his charities.

The stranger received back the paper without any reply, but immediately presented in its place the subscription to the Bible Society, and in a few clear and forcible words reminded him of its well-known claims, and again requested him to add something to his donation.

Mr. A—— became impatient.

"Have I not said," he replied, "that I can do nothing more for any charity than I did last year? There seems to be no end to the calls these days. At first there were only three or four objects presented, and the sums required moderate: now the objects increase every day, and call upon us for money; and all, after we have given once, want us to double, and treble and quadruple our subscriptions. There is no end to the thing. We may as well stop in one place as another."

The stranger took back the paper, rose, and fixing his eye on his companion, said, in a voice that thrilled to his soul—

"One year ago, to-night, you thought that your daughter was dying; you could not rest for agony: upon whom did you call that night?"

The merchant started, and looked up: there seemed a change to have passed over the whole form of his visitor, whose eye was fixed on him with a calm, intense, penetrating expression that subdued him; he drew back, covered his face, and made no reply.

"Five years ago," said the stranger, "when you lay at the brink of the grave, and thought that if you died then you would leave a family unprovided for, do you remember how you prayed? Who saved you then?"

The stranger paused for an answer, but there was a dead silence. The merchant only bent forward as one entirely overcome, and rested his head on the seat before him.

The stranger drew yet nearer, and said, in a still lower and more impressive tone,—

"Do you remember, fifteen years since, that time when you felt yourself so lost, so helpless, so hopeless; when you spent day and night in prayer; when you thought you would give the world for one hour's assurance that your sins were forgiven you? Who listened to you then?"

"It was my God and Saviour," said the merchant, with a sudden burst of remorseful feeling: "Oh, yes, it was He!"

"And has He ever complained of being called on too often?" inquired the stranger in a voice of reproachful sweetness. "Say," added he, "are you willing to begin this night and ask no more of Him, if He from this night will ask no more from you?"

"O never, never, never!" said the merchant, throwing himself at his feet; but, as he spake these words, the figure seemed to vanish, and he awoke with his whole soul stirred within.

"O God and Saviour! what have I been doing!" he exclaimed. "Take all—take everything! What is all that I have done, to what thou hast done for me?"

THE TWENTY-SEVEN CANARIES: A STORY OF THE SUNDAY BIRD FAIR.

At a weekly meeting of the Committee of one of our Female Reformatories, a woman, poorly, but neatly clad, applied for admission. She was above the average age of the applicants, but she told a simple and apparently truthful tale, saying she had been left a widow without family, but in an evil hour had fallen, but was utterly disgusted with her sin and was desirous to leave it. On the following week we heard she was going on well, but her matron said there was "something on her mind." This, however, is not uncommon amongst our inmates.

When the Committee met again, we were told that a day or two before, a very decent-looking man had been there in great distress to know if a woman exactly answering the description he gave, named A. F. had come in; for his wife had left him, and after applying at every police-court he had been sent to our institution in search of her. Although no one calling herself A. F. was in the house; that was nothing, as those applying for admission rarely give their true names, and as the servant thought his description answered to one of the women, she told him to come to see the Committee.

We had not been long assembled when we were told Mr. F., as he called himself, was waiting in the hall, and we gave him an audience. He was a clever, good-looking man about twenty-seven years of age, respectably dressed; he came in with many bows and scraping of the feet. We asked him why he had come there. He again said his wife had run away, and after being at every lock-up he had been advised to try Pentonville or White Lion Street.

He said he was a porter in Leadenhall Market where he had been from a boy. When he was twenty-one he married a woman rather older than himself; he then pulled out what had once been a pocket-book, and from it produced his marriage certificate, well worn and not over clean. That Mrs. F. (for neither of them spoke of the other but as Mr. or Mrs. F.) had been a good wife to him, and the only reason he could give for her running away was, that she had once got into debt; he forgave her, but told her never to do so again. She had, however, once more got into arrears for eighteen shillings; this she could not bear him to know, and as the woman at whose shop she had got the articles threatened to tell him she ran away.

As the description he gave of his wife suited in every respect the woman we had admitted a fortnight before, after sending Mr. F.—— into the hall for a time, we had her brought before us, and questioned as to her history. At first she adhered to the story of being a widow; I said, "You know your husband is not dead, you know too, why you were so foolish as to run away, and then come and impose upon us, which was very wicked." She burst into a passion of grief, and confessed it was so. When I asked her "why she had left her husband," she told us the same tale about the eighteen shillings as he had done, adding that "no woman ever had so good a husband, he never got tipsy, never beat her, he gave her all his wages, which

were eighteen shillings per week, but when she got so far behind she could not bear to tell him, after his forgiving her before, and that her only resource seemed to be the canal (to drown herself), or to come to Pentonville." We questioned her how it was she had got into debt with a sober husband and no family. She replied, "Mr. F. must have meat for his dinner and also for his supper, as he had hard work; and half a pint of beer to each meal, besides his tea, so with all that, clothes to buy, 3s. 6d. a week for rent, and then to feed twenty-seven canaries, it took *more* than the 18s." She added, "he now makes next to nothing with his birds, but he won't, for all that, part with them." We could not make out about the canaries, so dismissing her we again sent for Mr. F. He told us that every Sunday there was a fair at Bethnal Green, and that "for a *many years*" he went there every Sunday to sell his canaries, and made a good bit by them. He said he used to see a *gentleman* standing on a chair, just outside the crowd, saying something from a book, and he thought he would just go and hear. He did go, and liked the singing; then he heard it was an awful sin to buy and sell on the Sabbath day, which ought to be a day of rest and worship in the House of God. He thought much about it, and went again the next Sunday, and several times, and always heard the same thing—so at last he spoke to the preacher, who took much pains to show him that the Lord's day was instituted for a day of *worship* and *rest*. Mr. F. went on to say he determined to give up selling on Sundays, and to make it a day of *rest*; but he could not give up his pets, he could not live without them, "and now," he said, "for one I sell on a week day I used to sell ten on Sundays, but I have a day of *rest!*"

We inquired *how* he spent his day of rest? and he said, "I don't get from the market till nearly two on Sunday morning, I comes home, gets my supper, and gets a good lie on Sunday morning. I gets up and puts on my Sunday clothes, and we gets our dinner, and then as I can't read (as my parents died when I was a boy), I gets Mrs. F. to read chapter after chapter in the Bible, then we goes to church, then she reads a chapter when we gets home, and we goes soon to bed, and is not that a day of rest, ladies?" Now Mr. and Mrs. F.'s mode of spending the Sabbath may be different to ours, yet that poor unlettered man's idea of waiting on the Lord, and giving up for His sake what was a source of wealth to him, may be quite as acceptable to our Heavenly Father,

We called in the wife, made them shake hands, and dismissed them with an earnest prayer that the Lord would watch over them and guide them.

One of the ladies gave Mr. F. an order for two canaries at 2s. 6d. each: and a short time after he came with his finest bird, in a very neat cage, and left it at the door of the institution, saying it was a small mark of gratitude for our kindness to his wife; and there it is now, singing most charmingly.

One day, not very long ago, a young woman presented herself for admission, and handed in a letter addressed to "The Ladies." It was a most extraordinary document, but I was able to make out that the writer had met the bearer, and, seeing the life she was leading, had persuaded the girl to come to a home where she would be kindly treated, and then thanking us for our kindness, it concluded with the assurance that we had the prayers of Mr. and Mrs. F.

Not very long ago Mrs. F. called with a fine little girl, she and Mr. F. had adopted, as they had no children. They also brought a photograph of him and her to show us, they were getting on happily, always attending public worship. I need scarcely say that they still keep some canaries.

Whoever may have been the good man who was on that day preaching to the seemingly hopeless rabble which assembles at Bethnal Green fair, and was the first to declare the words of life to Mr. F., may well be encouraged to persevere, for he shall have souls for his hire, though he may not know it till "the day shall declare it."

G. J.

CARR STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

THE adventurous traveller who is anxious to discover a north-east passage from Stepney Church to the Mile End Road will, at the very beginning of his journey, plunge into a locality the dirtiness of which may be smelt as well as seen. The kennels are filled with reeking filth composed of stagnant water, and the *débris* of that article of food which, in the vernacular, is fancifully named "greens," but which more appropriately might be called "yellow." The delectable compound thus formed might justly be called "Cholera mixture."

The numerous establishments for the sale of apples, herrings, grapes, "greens," fried fish, naphtha, &c., have much unsaleable material to get rid of, and the kennel forms a cheap and convenient receptacle for it.

Pursuing his course, the explorer traverses more than one street where persons reside who are sometimes "wanted," till he arrives at a street not less respectable than the rest, but which has in it something which at once arrests his attention. Under a lamp which projects from a large house, he perceives several boys are standing, whose faces, soaped yet sulky, betoken good intentions unfulfilled. A glare of light, and a hum of voices issue from the upper windows of the house. Pushing open the swing door, the inquirer finds himself in a long room where nearly 200 boys are seated. A glance at the congregation shows that it is composed of the younger brothers of the young costermongers he met at the corner of the street.

These youngsters may be said to belong to the class of the "unwashed," though a clean face is not rare, and some of the more well-to-do have put on boots. This is the boys' section of the Carr Street Ragged School, the upper room being set apart for the girls, who, like the boys, are under the government of a superintendent and staff of teachers. The course pursued by the managers of this admirable institution seems to be to encourage, by every possible means, the attendance of the young people of the neighbourhood, to gather them into classes of about a dozen each; to appoint an earnest God-fearing man to perform the office of teacher; and to leave the rest to his judgment and tact. Each teacher goes to work in his own way—no rule or restriction being laid down by the committee, except that

the religious instruction is strictly rudimentary, and without the slightest approach to sectarian bias. For seventeen years this civilising institution has been at work in the district, and every year its sphere of usefulness enlarges, so that last year it was found impossible to accommodate the number of boys and girls who desired admission. The Sunday evening attendance averaged 325. A free Day School is also in active operation, and every year increases in numbers—the average attendance being 125. Girls' and boys' evening Schools are also in active operation, as well as Bands of Hope, industrial classes, &c. There is also a Penny Savings' Bank, in which £480 was banked last year, the number of deposits being 13,962. Yet all this work was carried out last year at a cost of £153.

When we visited the School on Sunday evening there were 172 boys in the large room who were being instructed by about ten teachers, and the superintendent performing the duty of keeping general order. Much gentleness and kindness is, as may be expected, used in the governance of this crowd of little ones; but occasionally a youngster "breaks out" in spite of repeated warnings, in which case the delinquent experiences the stern punishment of being sent to join the ranks of the soaped and sulky boys we saw outside.

In a small room adjoining the large hall, is a class of about eighteen or twenty elder boys, who, when we entered, were kneeling in prayer, many of them having every appearance of earnestness and sincerity. In the upper room about 150 girls were in course of instruction upon a similar plan to that adopted among the boys. In January last it was, as we have said, found that the increasing attendance at the Free Day School and the Sabbath Evening Schools, and the growing necessity for having a larger room for the various meetings was such, that the teachers earnestly requested the committee to take such steps as were necessary to extend the lower Schoolroom; the teachers promising at the same time to use their utmost endeavours to assist in raising the necessary funds. This resolution was shortly afterwards acted upon, and the accommodation has been nearly doubled, besides which a substantial soup kitchen has been erected. The cost of these alterations was £250.

Another want which is not even second to the want of funds, is, gentlemen who will become teachers. Boys have sometimes to be turned away from the doors, not so much from want of room as from want of teachers. The committee, therefore, appeal to old and young, without distinction of sect or denomination, to come and help them. It has been over and over again averred by the greatest political economists—that the attempt to advance the morality of the lower classes by punishing offenders against public law, is a beginning at the wrong end; and it has confidently been asserted that the only true and proper method is to teach the young to do better than their fathers.

SERVANTS' MISSION.

Among the missionary efforts which take up special departments of labour in London, none is more needed, nor, in proportion to the means employed, is more useful than this mission. The report gives the following account of the origin of the work:—

A Christian lady, Miss Malpas, upon whose heart the spiritual welfare of servants had been laid for the last fourteen years, at the beginning of 1867 determined to do all in her power to commence a work among them, and she placed apart a sum of money sufficient to pay the salary of one missionary for *one* year, trusting that God would raise up a suitable man for the work. A footman in the same house with Miss Malpas, and subsequently one of the missionaries, who had been brought to the knowledge of the truth, had daily joined with her in asking God to commence a mission work among servants. Unknown to either of these, ever since 1864, a number of Christian servants from different parts of London (amounting at times to thirty-two) had been in the habit of meeting together once a week for "special" prayer for servants.

About this time there was a young footman in a family in Belgravia whose heart the Lord had touched, and from an earnest desire to bring servants to the knowledge of those glorious truths which made him so happy, was in the habit of giving tracts to coachmen and footmen, who, like himself, were waiting with their masters' carriages outside the various places of resort of the fashionable world, during the day and night. The Lord gave him great encouragement, in answer to prayer enabling him to speak the word with power. At the beginning of 1867, he left his situation, and Miss Malpas heard of him and engaged him as a missionary, and shortly afterwards the other footman (before mentioned) was also engaged. The committee was formed. The work began early in 1867. These two missionaries were at work during the night in the streets, outside houses, theatres, etc., where parties, concerts, balls, etc., were going on; giving tracts and speaking the word of life to the servants who were waiting with their masters' carriages. The Lord showed his approval of the work at once, and in a most marked manner blessed the labours of the two missionaries.

A room was secured through the kindness of the Rev. Clarmont Skrine, one of the committee, at the schoolroom of St. Peter's chapel, Charlotte Street, Buckingham Gate, for the purpose of holding Bible classes and prayer meetings on Sundays and on other days during the week, for anxious and converted servants; and the attendances which at first were very small have increased, and at present the meetings are well attended. But the principal part of the work, viz., that carried on in the streets, has been blessed in such a manner that it has called forth the praises of all connected with the mission, to Him who alone gives the increase. Several remarkable cases of conversions among servants have occurred during the past year, by means of this mission; and there are many servants who, on being first offered the tracts, and on being spoken to by the missionaries, resented their interference and scoffed at their words, who are now proving by their con-

sistent walk that the Spirit of the living God has been at work in their hearts, and that they are indeed alive from the dead.

A large class who need sympathy are servants out of place. People are not generally aware of the suffering, privations, and hardships endured by servants who remain out of place for any lengthened time. Every night may be met men who once held good situations, prowling about the streets, without a roof to shelter them, and faint from exhaustion. No doubt in many cases the blame is their own, when drink has been the cause of their present low estate; but there are many who are now dying in poor-houses, or hiding their heads in low lodging-houses, who have been brought to their present fearful situation from sickness and other causes, over which they had no control; and the practice of families engaging servants *only* for the season, causes a great deal of suffering and poverty among them, as during the dull part of the year they cannot obtain employment.

This class enlisted the sympathy of those connected with the mission, and several free teas were given to servants "out of place," at one of which over 150 sat down, at another 100, and gospel addresses were given by Christian servants. The expense attending these teas was defrayed entirely by money received in answer to prayer, and not from the funds of the mission. A great blessing was the result of them, and many poor wandering sheep were brought into the fold of the Saviour.

Among those who professed to find peace, many have stood firm in the faith, and there are now in gentlemen's families servants giving every satisfaction by their honesty, sobriety, and general good conduct, who, not many months ago, were to be seen with haggard faces, threadbare clothes, and almost desperate from want, prowling the streets of London, without, as they thought, one friend. But they have since found that there was an eye of pity and of love on them, that never closes—the eye of One who, while He was here in the flesh, shed tears of sympathy with those who suffered, and who now, although no longer among us, is still the same loving Jesus, the friend of publicans and sinners.

Many of these homeless ones have been provided for in situations, Christian servants clubbing together to find them the necessary outfit. As the servants of London have long been, in a spiritual sense, a most neglected class, this mission has a wide sphere of usefulness before it.

MINIMUM CHRISTIANS.

THE minimum Christian! And who is he? The Christian who is going to heaven at the cheapest rate possible. The Christian who intends to get all of the world he can, and not meet the worldling's doom. The Christian who aims to have as little religion as he can, without lacking it altogether.

The minimum Christian goes to church in the morning, and in the afternoon also, unless it rains, or is too warm, or too cold, or he is sleepy, or has the headache from eating too much at dinner. He listens most respectfully to the preacher, and joins in prayer and praise. He applies the truth very sensibly sometimes to himself, oftener to his neighbours.

The minimum Christian is very friendly to all good works. He wishes them well, but it is not in his power to do much for them. The Ragged School he looks upon as an admirable institution, especially for the neglected and ignorant. It is not convenient, however, for him to take a class. His business engagements are so pressing during the week, that he needs Sunday as a day of rest; nor does he think himself qualified to act as teacher. There are so many persons better prepared for this important duty that he must beg to be excused; still he would do it if he must. He is in favour of visiting the poor, but he has no time to take part in those labours of love. He is very friendly to home and foreign missions, and gives his mite. He thinks there are "too many appeals," but he gives, if not enough to save his reputation, pretty near it; at all events he aims at it.

The minimum Christian is not clear on a number of points. The opera and dancing, perhaps the theatre and card-playing; large fashionable parties give him much trouble. He cannot see the harm in this, or that, or the other popular amusement. There is nothing in the Bible against it. He does not see but a man may be a Christian, and dance or go to the opera. He knows several excellent persons who do. Why should not he?

In short, the minimum Christian knows that he cannot serve God and mammon. He would if he could; but he will come just as near doing so as he can. He will give to himself and the world all that he may, and to God as little as he can, and yet not lose his soul. He stands so close to the dividing line between the people of God and the people of the world, that it is hard to say on which side of it he actually is found.

Ah, my brother, are you making this attempt? Beware, lest you find at last that in trying to get to heaven with as little religion as possible, you have missed it altogether; lest, without gaining the whole world, you lose your own soul. The true child of God does not say "How little," but "How much, may I do for my God?" They thus judge, that as One died for all, He died that they which live should no more live for themselves, but for Him that died for them. Leaving the things that are behind, they reach forth toward those that are before, ever exclaiming, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?"

Reader, are you a minimum Christian? There is reason to fear that such are no Christians at all. "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

OUT OF THE GUTTER.

Ragged, dirty, ugly. He had fallen in the muddy gutter; his hands were black, his face ditto, his mouth wide open, and sending forth sounds not the most musical. A rough hand lifted him up and placed him against the wall. There he stood, his tears making little gutters down his begrimed cheeks. Men as they passed laughed at him, not caring for a moment to stop and inquire if he were really hurt. Boys halted a minute to jeer and load him with their insults. Poor boy! he hadn't a friend in the world that

he knew of. Certainly he did not deserve one; but if none but the deserving had friends, how many would be friendless!

A lady is passing; her kindliness of heart prompts her to stay and say a word to the boys who are joking their companion and laughing at his sorrow. Then she looks fixedly at the dirty, crouching lad against the wall.

"Why, John, is it you?"

He removes one black fist from his eye and looks up. He recognises her. She has taught him at the Ragged School.

"Oh, ma'am, I'm so bad!"

She has him examined, then taken to the hospital. Afterwards she visits him kindly and frequently.

A year passes by.

There is a fire one night. A dwelling-house is in flames. The engine has not yet arrived. The inmates cannot be rescued. A boy has looked on. Suddenly he shouts, "Oh, she lives here!" Then he climbs up the heated falling stairs. He fights against the suffocating smoke. He hunts about till he finds what he sought. She has fainted—is dying perhaps. No! he will save her. Five minutes of agonising suspense, and she is safe in the cool air.

The bystanders are struck with the intrepidity of the boy. He only walks away, muttering, "She didn't turn away from me when I was hurt."

Oh, friends, the stone looks very rough, but it may be a diamond.—*Life Sketches.*

"ECHO" OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

FROM the *Echo*, a new evening paper, we extract the following "leader" on Ragged Schools:—

"Tumbling in the gutters of London thoroughfares, huddled by night under archways and upon door-steps, neglected as no other animal of his size is neglected in a civilized community, the "street Arabs" found their best friends in the patrons and promoters of Ragged Schools. Now, when there is some thought of the necessity for general education, when a conviction has permeated society that ignorance is linked with pauperism and crime, we can look back with some complacency to the time when poverty was pushed aside into squalid rookeries where the light of knowledge, and the gentle, soft hand of charity made no attempt to enter.

There is, indeed, much left undone that we ought to have done, but it is a great gain to be within sight of our duty, to recognize, though it be from afar, that practical brotherhood of humanity which Christ came to inculcate upon earth. For the education that the public mind has received upon this question how much do they not owe to the Ragged School Union! That body has brought forward these boys; has pushed them, as it were, before the public—daring society to neglect so immediate a duty. These friendless and often nameless children are, as it were, the raw material from which our national prosperity is manufactured; neglect them, and they revenge

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themselves fearfully upon society; what they will do with a little kindly training the latest report of the Ragged School Union sufficiently shows. "Upon the Society's list are 187 School buildings, in which are conducted 237 Sunday Schools, with an average attendance of 31,357 scholars; also 181 Day Schools, with an average attendance of 22,063 scholars, besides 211 Evening Schools, with an average attendance of 9,855 scholars.

From their most interesting report we find that they are bankers, not dealing much in pass-books and heavy cheques, but sowing broadcast the seed which produces thrifty and prudent men. They have established no less than 104 Penny Banks, wherein a large number of the depositors have only a penny, and some only "a fraction of a penny." But "mony a mickle makes a muckle," and 5,478 depositors paid in during last year £1,630 17s. 10d., and withdrew £1,413 15s. 7d. These figures show how great trouble this labour of love must give to the benevolent bankers. But the profits of the Shoe Black Brigade are most astonishing. During last year 355 boys earned £7,838 12s. 5d. Thus we are able to observe some of the results of the Ragged School system, but we cannot measure its benefits, for the evils it has prevented we can but imperfectly estimate.

We are better enabled to measure the immense good which has thus been accomplished by regarding the probable condition of these poor boys had they not been so cared for. And when we proceed to consider the subject of national education, we must not lose sight of the mainspring which has been the chief operator in this good work. These children would never have been able to throw aside their filthy rags, would never have known that the wealthy are not all selfish and cruel—would have remained, perhaps to the end of their life, ignorant of the moral duties which human beings owe to each other, but for the desire which some men had to teach to these most helpless of God's creatures the lessons which Christ left for our instruction. It may be that we shall be forced to adopt a system of education which, in regard to public payment, will be secular, but in accepting any scheme necessary to bring such training as a right to all, we shall not forget that the love of learning alone has never begotten such energy as the Ragged School Union have displayed.

Poet's Corner.

THE LONELY BROOK.

A PARABLE.

Those members which seem to be feeble are necessary (1 Cor. xii. 22).

Up in the wild, where no one comes to look
There lives and sings a little lonely brook;
Liveth and singeth in the dreary pines,
Yet creepeth on to where the daylight shines.

Pure from their heaven, in mountain chalice caught
It drinks the rains, as drinks the soul her thought;
And down dim hollows, where it winds along,
Bears its life-burden of unlistened song.

I catch the murmur of its undertone.
That sigheth ceaselessly, 'Alone! alone!'
And hear, afar, the rivers gloriously
Shout on their paths toward the shining sea:

The voiceful rivers, chanting to the sun,
And wearing names of honour, every one;
Outstretching wide, and joining hand with hand,
To pour great gifts along the asking land.

Ah! lonely brook, creep onward through the pines;
Press through the gloom, to where the daylight shines,
Sing on among the stones, and secretly
Feel how the floods are all akin to thee!

Drink the sweet rain the gentle heaven sendeth;
Hold thine own path, howeverward it tendeth;
For, somewhere underneath the eternal sky,
Thou, too, shalt find the Ocean by-and-by!

Teachers' Column.

ABSENTEE VISITATION.

Of all the plans used in Ragged Schools to keep up the attendance, not one has been found so useful as that of home visitation of absentees. Though the multiplicity and variety of the engagements of Ragged School teachers renders it impossible to lay down any stringent and unyielding rules, yet the importance of the work makes it needful that it should be done—

1. *Systematic.*—That is, have some settled, well-arranged plan for your whole class; this should be well-studied, and wisely laid down, with a view to economy of time and space. Every scholar should be visited in turn, and at intervals, as the convenience and time of the teacher will permit. Absentees should be visited as soon after the Sunday as possible, not allowing a week to intervene. This is very desirable, seeing that sickness may have been the cause, and death may come in the interim.

2. *Kindly.*—Be not harsh, as if you were master, or slave-driver, or had a right to compel. Avoid a patronising air, and show by words of kindness and love that you only seek the best interests of the visited.

3. *Befriendly.*—Make yourselves quite at home. If only a three-legged stool is there, take it without any fuss, or looking round for a better seat; show that you are as comfortable there as on the softest couch. On no account let it be seen that you are taking a survey of the establishment. When there is anything deserving of commendation, do it wisely and frankly. If called upon to suggest any improvement, do it modestly and with great care and kindness. Remember it is possible to keep your station, and yet not appear to be above those you visit.

"HE PRAYED A GREAT DEAL."

This was the thoughtful remark of a member of the household of one of the most useful and one of the most honoured ministers of the present age.

We stood surveying the large and well-selected library. He had mastered its

treasures. But that was not the secret of his wisdom. It was this: "He prayed a great deal."

He possessed in an extraordinary degree the love and the confidence of the church. Was it because of his noble, affectionate, generous character? Not so much as because God gave it, for he kept near the heart of the Redeemer. He tried to be like Jesus. "He prayed a great deal."

He lavished time, and money, and health, and strength, with a consuming zeal, to serve the church; and the church honoured him as few have been honoured. But its deepest reverence was the tribute to his unfeigned piety, for "he prayed a great deal."

Great obstacles did not arrest his course. The blandishments of cultivated society did not seduce him from his arduous labours. He persevered even when his exhausted bodily powers besought for repose; for by faith his eyes were opened to the glories and the terrors of the world invisible to sense. "He prayed a great deal."

For him to live was Christ. "He prayed a great deal," because prayer was simply the talk of a holy son with that One who is infinitely able to strengthen, to enlighten, to fill full with heavenly peace. But "to him to die was gain." He has gotten all he sought or hoped for, in glory; and now he *praises* "a great deal."

So shall it be in time and in eternity; they that *pray* a great deal shall *praise* a great deal. "Lord, teach us how to pray." Reader, would *your* epitaph be —"He prayed a great deal"?

Children's Gallery.

OUR CHILDREN'S MAGAZINE.

MANY of our young friends, we are sure, will feel very sorry to hear that the Committee of the Ragged School Union, have been compelled to withdraw their old friend from the market. It has had a life of eighteen years, and has, by the blessing of God, done much to make good boys and girls and to fit them both for earth and heaven.

It was, however, after much thought, changed in its form at the beginning of 1868. Printed on better paper, enlarged in size, and with larger engravings, it was hoped that an increased circulation would have warranted this increased expense. But we regret to say that, though the sale increased, it was not sufficient to permit the further continuance of "Our Children's Magazine."

The Committee have not, however, given up their interest in pure juvenile literature; especially at a time when so many bad magazines are published and largely circulated. The subject is therefore under their consideration; and we hope, before long, some plan will be adopted to increase the circulation of good magazines in our Ragged Schools.

HIDING FROM HIS FATHER.

BY J. B. GOUGH.

A FRIEND of mine, seeking to relieve the poor, came to a flight of stairs that led to a door, which led into a room reaching under the slates. He knocked. A feeble voice said, "Come in," and he went in. There was no light; but as soon as his eye became adapted to the place, he saw, lying upon a heap of chips and shavings, a boy about ten years of age, pale, but with a sweet face.

"What are you doing here?" he asked of the boy.

"Hush, hush! I am hiding."

"Where is your mother?"

"Mother's dead."

"Where is your father?"

"Hush, hush! don't tell him; I am hiding."

"Hiding? What for?" And he showed his white arms covered with bruises and swollen. "Who was it that beat you like that?"

"Don't tell him; my father beat me."

"What for?"

"Father got drunk, and beat me, because I would not steal."

"Did you ever steal?"

"Yes, Sir; I was a thief once."

These London thieves never hesitate to acknowledge it. It is their profession.

"Then why wouldn't you steal for him now?"

"Because I went to the Ragged School, and they told me, 'Thou shalt not steal;' and they told me of God and heaven. I will never steal, Sir, if my father kills me."

Said my friend—"I don't know what to do with you; here is a shilling; I will see what I can do for you."

The boy looked at it for a moment, and then said—"But please, Sir, wouldn't you like to hear me sing my little hymn?"

My friend thought it strange that, without food, without fire, bruised and beaten as he lay there, he could sing a hymn; but he said—"Yes; I will hear you." And then, in a sweet voice, he sang—

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child."

"That's my little hymn, Sir! good-bye."

The gentleman went again in the morning, went upstairs, knocked at the door: no answer; opened it, and went in. The shilling lay upon the floor. There lay the boy, with a smile upon his face—he was dead! In the night he had gone home.

Thank God, that He has said, "Suffer little children to come unto me!" He is no respecter of persons, black or white, bond or free, old or young. He sends His angels to the homes of the poor and the destitute, the degraded and the wicked, to take His blood-bought little ones to His own bosom.

A DEATH-BED SERMON.

It was a cold, wet, wintry evening, when a ragged forlorn child, about six years old, was wandering through a large English town. No shoes! no bonnet! nothing but a few rags protected her from the chilling night air.

As she walked on, she thought she heard the voices of children, and stopped at the door of a large comfortable room, where many were assembled and, divided into classes, were learning to read God's word. How snug they look, thought she, as she peeped in at the half-closed door; but they were all tidy, neat, clean children, and the little wanderer felt this was no place for her.

Happily, however, she was seen before she passed on, and a gentle voice invited her in. Right glad was she to enter, and happy was she in listening to the story of the kind Saviour, who took little children in His arms and blessed them. She forgot how cold, and wet, and ragged she was, and listened with wonder to an account of the love of Jesus; a subject quite new to her. And another night she came, and yet another, till she learned to love the Saviour who first loved her.

After a time she became ill, too ill to move from the poor bed in the corner of the room where she lived. One Sabbath evening she was lying, quietly bearing her pain. Her father and mother were both with her, the former smoking and drinking, the latter patching her child's frock, when the voice of their little girl stopped them while engaged in a loud and angry talk.

"Mother," said the little sufferer, "I'll

never want that frock, the only other dress I shall wear will be the robe of my Saviour's righteousness!"

Then in a loud and joyful voice, she exclaimed—

"Oh, it is such a happy thing to love Jesus!"

Then, turning to her father, she said—

"Father, wouldn't you like to go to heaven?"

The man was startled, and replied suddenly—

"To be sure I would."

Looking at him earnestly, with deep feeling, she said—

"It is a *great* matter to be *sure* of it," and repeated the second time, "It is a *great* matter to be *sure* of it."

In a few days the spirit of that redeemed and purified child was with the Saviour she loved.

But her mission was accomplished—her last words remained in her father's heart—he *could not forget them.* And, dear children, *that* father, once a drunken, wicked man, has sought for and obtained forgiveness of his sins.

Editor's Note-book.

SOWING TIME.

It is a much more pleasant thing to reap than to sow; but whether we have been sowing or reaping, we have been doing the work of the Lord. The missionary work, so far as we know it, is more sowing than reaping generally. If there is any work that may be termed 'breaking up the fallow ground,' it is such work as we are engaged in.

Mr. Payne, of Holborn, who was many years one of the guardians of that Union, devoted much time and thought towards its inmates. He once said, 'I used to sit under the ministry of the Rev. J. H. Evans, at John-street Chapel. One evening he asked me how I was getting on in the workhouse? I told him that I felt very much discouraged, as I had laboured there seven years and had not seen one conversion, and that I felt ready to give it up. His answer was, "What? Give it up! By no means give it up, but rather thank God that He has given you faith enough to labour so long, under such circumstances."

Never forget that now is our sowing time: but as the time for reaping is fixed by God, it will surely be revealed at the fitting hour. We say the "fitting" time because God's time is for ever the best time.

"GOD GAVE THE INCREASE."

"I HAVE planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." So says the Bible. In prayer and elsewhere we often hear men say, "Paul may plant and Apollos may water, but God must give the increase." This is not the language of Scripture, nor does it give the same idea. The words men use imply that our labour in the Lord may be in vain. But this thought is not contained in the text. The promise is clear and distinct, "*Your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*" No sincere effort is put forth in the service of God without yielding fruit. If, for wise reasons, in time this fruit is concealed from the eyes of the doer, in eternity there will be a rich harvest.

And this is the truth taught by the apostle. Paul planted, Apollos watered. What then? God gave the increase. This is the statement of a fact and a principle universal in its application. When Paul plants and Apollos waters in the Spirit of Christ, God gives the

increase. It may not be in the way and manner that men expect. Prayer may be answered by crosses. Hope may be disappointed to humble pride. Success may come in such a way and at such a time as to teach man that he is nothing. Yet every true worker in the vineyard will see, in the end, the faithfulness of our God to his promise.

The husbandman when he sows expects to reap. Therefore he sows in hope. How much stronger and more joyful should be the hope of the Christian. The husbandman has no express promise. His labour may, and often does, prove in vain. Not so with the Christian. Laying hold of those cheering words, "your labour is not in vain in the Lord," he can go forth confident that every sincere effort will produce a result.

Our Library Table.

The Hunchback Crossing Sweeper. By J. Hooper. London: Boddington.

No one can visit our Ragged Schools without noticing many crippled boys or girls in the classes. They are, however, rarely cripples from birth; but being entrusted to the care of baby-sisters who are either too weak to carry, or too thoughtless to nurse them properly, they had terrible falls and so have become crippled for life. This, about sixteen years ago, led some ladies who were interested in Ragged Schools, to open a Female Cripples' Home. Its success has more recently caused a Boys' Cripples' Home to be established with every promise of similar usefulness. The above little narrative gives a sketch of one of the inmates, getting a scanty living as a crossing sweeper. He, a poor hunchback, was received into the "Home for Crippled Boys," and there he not only found a refuge from the evils incident to street life, but, what was better still, rest for his soul in Jesus. The greater part of the narrative is devoted to a sermon on his dying words, "I am ready."

Little Messengers. London: Religious Tract Society.

THE above includes several tales—founded on fact—by a lady who has shown deep interest in Ragged Schools. They have this benefit that the moral is so interwoven into the tale, that to read the one, is to perceive the other. Hence we need scarcely say that there is no occasion, as in the story books of our boyhood, to write the word "moral" in large letters at the end of the tale, lest the writer's object should not be seen. The style being simple and vivid, these Little Messengers will be a welcome addition to every child library.

Correspondence.

JUVENILE SENSATIONALISM.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—You have recently adverted to the evils incident to the corrupt literature which disgraces the Press of our great cities. And surely, when we think in what a captivating style these novels are written, it is time to "sound an alarm," such as will awaken those Christians who are sleeping with the enemy at the "gate." By romances which obliterate the "*not*" in the prohibitory commandments, and by songs which, when not foul, are so foolish as to cause wonder as to what kind of persons they can be who have patience to write them, our juveniles are being defiled body and soul; and the work of Ragged Schools is being undone to an extent which the *Newgate Calendar* will, I fear, soon tell. What sort of men and women those will make who luxuriate in this literary sewage may be readily inferred; for if we sow tares how can we possibly gather grapes? For by an inexorable law like *must* produce like.

Nor does this juvenile rage for sensationalism end in novels which transform burglars and coiners into heroes, to be admired and imitated. For this vice has recently assumed a new form. Thus the hoardings of all unfinished railways, and other large buildings, are covered with placards with the most horrible scenes depicted that can be imagined. Thus at King's Cross we see the picture of an express engine at full speed, with a female lying on the rails ready to be crushed. This, it appears, is the way that the Surrey Theatre advertises its *amusements* (!!) Then, again, a Whitechapel devil's house gives a picture of a gigantic death's head, which it entitles a "Death Medal." Another is suspended from the balcony of Victoria Theatre, in which burglary, murder, adultery, and suicide are grouped together in various compartments of the same broad sheet. All these sensational pictures are of large dimensions, and are painted in such glaring colours as to make these Satanic pictures still more horrible. But, as if this peep into the "Chamber of Horrors" was not sufficient—still more gigantic bills stare us in the face everywhere, in which semi-nude women are seen galloping at full speed through hoops or over huge gates—apparently bent on suicide to "make an English holiday." No wonder that tales of juvenile brutality crowd our newspapers; for round these placards boys and girls are usually found grouped together; their gestures and speech showing too well how they luxuriate in this moral filth.

These terrible spectacles—and their name is legion—would almost seem to indicate that the time is fast approaching (Rev. xii. 12) when "the devil will come down having great wrath, because he knoweth his time is short." But whether this crisis in the world's history be near or not, still this influx of literary sewage and of satanic pictures indicates to what terrible temptations the youth of our great cities are now exposed. If then Ragged Schools were ever needed, it is obvious that their mission to socialize and save the outcast and destitute has not yet been fulfilled.

It is, then, in the interests of these poor victims of parental neglect that I now write. For are we not bound, by the very office we have assumed, not only to denounce, but to guard the attendants of Ragged Schools against the prevalent sensationalism? And can we do so better than by implanting such a love of good reading that thieves' romance and vile pictures will be spurned as so much moral sewage? This we can best do by establishing or extending libraries in every Ragged School. But here an evil must be guarded against akin to that which we have denounced. For, if our shelves are filled with so-called religious romances, which are anything but a photograph of real life, we can only stimulate that love of sensationalism which by-and-by may find its fitting food in the deeds of "Blueskin," or "Dick Turpin." What we want then is books which, while they interest, also instruct—travels, biography, natural history, for example, and which will so elevate the moral tone that our scholars will not restrict religion to Sundays, but make it the principle of every-day life.

I am, &c.,

Q. IN THE CORNER.

Notices of Meetings.

GRAVESEND.

THE annual meeting in connection with the Gravesend Ragged School took place at the Assembly-rooms, on November 30th. F. Leith, Esq. (Mayor), presided.

The Hon. Secretary (Mr. L. J. Essenhigh) read the sixteenth annual report. The Committee were thankful to state that although the past year had been marked by great losses and trials, yet by God's blessing, these had not been allowed to hinder the carrying on successfully of this good work. The committee could not pass over in silence the death of the late esteemed treasurer and superintendent, Mr. Crook, whose devotedness in this and kindred work had been, under providence, so great a benefit; but whilst keenly feeling the loss this institution especially had suffered thereby they were cheered on to the work both by the remembrance of that devotedness and by the motto "never give up," which having through life sustained him in this work, was his dying charge to his fellow-labourers. The fire, which during the summer destroyed a large portion of the school buildings, would have been a great hindrance to this work but for the kindness of friends; and the committee desired to record their obligations to the Sailors' Society for the use of their Bethel reading-room in which to carry on the day school, and to the committee of the Gravesend British school for the use of their school in Kempthorne-street, for the Sunday school. The report proceeded to speak of the operations of the Sunday school, opened under an earnest band of teachers, to whom much honour was due. The average attendance had been as follows:—In the summer months, afternoon scholars 77; evening 114; afternoon teachers 13; evening 20. Winter months, afternoon scholars 100; evening 179; afternoon teachers 15; evening 27. The increase might be accounted for by the influence of the Bible-woman in visiting the homes and impressing upon the parents the necessity of regular attendance of their children. Additional

teachers were much required; and the committee earnestly appealed to those who had it in their power to come forward and help in the great work of reclaiming the poor ignorant outcast of the town. The attendance at the day school had greatly increased during the year. The school is entirely free, the only rule for exclusion being the ability of the parents to pay at some other school. The night school for boys, open three evenings each week during the winter months, had been regularly attended; and the girls' evening school, also open three times in a week, had been attended by elder scholars who worked during the day. The Childrens' Aid Fund, consisting of money collected in pence and half-pence from the teachers and children, was used in supplying any of the children who were sick or in great distress with necessary comforts. The mission services had been conducted on Sunday evenings, and had been numerously attended. The mothers' meetings, conducted by a committee of ladies, had now been established eight years; and there were now 51 members. The weekly payments by members for clothing amounted to £28 19s. 1½d. The Penny Bank showed a balance at the bank of £121 13s. 7d. After alluding to the children's and infants' treats, and to the parents' meeting, the report proceeded to state that the temperance society still held its meetings, and lectures had been given once a fortnight during the winter months. The Public Soup Kitchen was successfully worked during last winter. The quantity of soup made during last season was 25,800 quarts; the number of dinners (soup and bread) eaten on the premises, 2,529; in addition to which 6,602 dinners were supplied to children of the school. Not less than 2,000 persons were thus enabled to partake of a Christmas dinner in the town in 1867. The meeting was addressed by Rev. Messrs. Wilson, Wheeler, Holroyd, Carpenter, Kluht, Dr. Armstrong, and Mr. Curtis of the Ragged School Union.

GREAT QUEEN STREET.

LAST year about this time dinners were given every week to some hundreds of poor children at the Refuge for Homeless Boys, Great Queen Street; and we have now to announce that the admirable machinery of benevolence which proved so successful twelve months ago has been set to work in anticipation of the ensuing winter. The first dinner was given on December 8th, when about 600 little ones of both sexes sat down to a substantial meal of roast beef and potatoes—with the hearty, vigorous appetites and craving desires of growing boys and girls to whom flesh meat was a rarity. How many bushels of potatoes had been cooked for their consumption we are quite unable to say, but the provision of beef extended to no less than fifty-two stone; and after the teachers and attendants had dined but a very small portion of the quantity remained undisposed of. It was capitally cooked—some of it in the kitchens of the Refuge, and some in the ovens of neighbouring bakers. Grace was sung by the children both before and after dinner, and when the feast was concluded, Mr. W. Williams explained to his guests how many dinners had been given and at what cost, last year: and informed them of what was intended to be done during the present winter. His inquiry as to what they thought their dinners had cost was attended with rather an amusing result. At first there was a dead silence; but at last one adventurous spirit, boldly suggested that they might have been procured for "sixpence." This suggestion was received by the better informed children with shouts of laughter; but the announcement that there had actually been expended upon their nourishment so (to them) fabulous a sum as £196 appeared to excite feelings of astonishment and wonder, approaching even to awe. The amount that will be required to provide a weekly dinner for 500 children during the next three months will be about £200.

Papers, Original and Selected.

LONDON PAUPERISM AND LONDON CHARITY.

PROBABLY no nation does so much to help the poor or afflicted as England. We do not refer to that compulsory provision for the poor which is made by the Poor Law—a system which is unknown elsewhere in Europe—but to that voluntary taxation which properly comes under the head of "free-will offerings." The amount thus contributed yearly is almost startling. Thus Dr. Hawksley, at a recent Conference on Pauperism and Crime, showed by statistics, which were mostly authenticated, that no less than £7,000,000 are contributed in London alone, either for the repression of crime, or for the help of the poor or the sick.

In very many cases this money is undoubtedly given to such unworthy objects that charity almost becomes a social crime. This is especially the case with the weekly dole given to out-door paupers. Often have we seen women, after receiving their weekly allowance at Marylebone workhouse, troop off in shoals to the public-house at the corner of Baker Street, and there spend the money, so unwisely given, in gin and other noxious drinks. Others, too, make parish or private charity an excuse for idleness or improvidence. Thus the Rev. S. Hansard, the rector of Bethnal Green, lately stated that many men who earned thirty shillings weekly in summer did not save one farthing out of their wages, but spent their money in gluttony or drunkenness. When remonstrated with their only reply was, "Oh, the gents at the West-end will keep us in winter!"

It is, indeed, this merely living for the present, careless of the future, which is the cause of the bulk of the chronic distress of many districts of our great cities. For example, how many poor men and women, yea, even boys and girls, marry without either a home or the slightest prospect of a living! Thus we find, from the report of the Commission on the Law of Marriage, that in three midland counties alone no less than 180 boys and 500 girls, barely fifteen years of age, married in one year. We have not the statistics of the London "rookeries," but too often we hear of such

marriages of boys and girls; they are mostly too poor to pay even the marriage fee. When we have remonstrated with them their only reply has been, "Oh, me and my gal can go to the workhouse whenever we like."

We do not indicate these painful facts to stop the hand of charity from helping the really necessitous; but rather to urge our readers to the exercise of that truer charity which never gives till it has made prior inquiry. For we know that the words of our Divine Master are still true, "Ye have the poor with you always." But then this clearly refers to those who, through some physical ailment or mental affliction, are unable to earn their living by a fair day's labour. Thus we learn that there are above 5,000 cripples, and 10,000 imbecile or insane persons in London alone; and that there are above 30,000 men and women in England who are totally blind. These have every claim upon the public; in fact, if charity can ever be regarded as *a right*, it is in these cases.

But to these classes must be added the sick; not consisting merely of the poorer classes generally, but as often of those skilled mechanics who are too proud to take any aid when able to work How often have we seen the children of such persons in Ragged Schools! Better dressed and cleaner than is usually the case, they would never have entered our Schools had their fathers not been stricken down by fever, or been shattered by some terrible accident. For these, hospitals and infirmaries are properly provided. At a rough estimate it may be stated that in the course of a year the medical officers of our hospitals and dispensaries deal with more than a million of cases. The general hospitals take charge of about 640,000; the hospitals for special diseases have about 200,000 patients; and the free dispensaries more than 356,000 cases. Of course it is probable that the name of one person appears on the lists several times in the year, but, when all reasonable allowance is made for such repetitions, it will still be seen that the poor of London, when sick, have very great advantages. The mention of free dispensaries recalls the fact that there are three or four dispensaries that are distinguished by the name "Provident." A workman, by subscribing a small weekly sum to one of these, secures the attendance of a doctor and the supply of medicine to himself and family. But it is doubtful whether all these provident dispensaries treat 20,000 cases in the course of a year.

It is sad, however, to find that, in spite of charity, so vast in

extent, and reaching every possible class, the pauperism of London increases year by year. Take, for example, the following statistics of London pauperism as showing its frightful proportions. In 1861 the population within the metropolitan poor-law district was reckoned at 2,803,989; it may now be stated, roughly, to be 3,500,000. Ten years ago, in the week ended on the 1st January, 1858, 77,660 paupers were relieved; but in the corresponding week of 1868, the number had risen to 163,179, or more than double the previous number. It is worth while to note where the increase is greatest. Thus in St. Luke's the advance in numbers between January, 1858, and January, 1868, is from 1,695 to 3,430; in Whitechapel the change is from 2,223 to 5,266; in Mile-end it is from 2,161 to 4,411; and in Poplar we have evidence of a most deplorable addition to *permanent* pauperism in the statement that, whilst in the week which ended on the 1st January, 1858, only 2,874 paupers were relieved, in the corresponding week of 1868 the number had grown to 9,996. It is sad to know that within the last ten years, while the population of London has increased one-sixth, its pauperism has increased one-half. It is a fact that in the last week of September there were relieved in this metropolis 34,653 indoor, and 96,957 outdoor, paupers, making a total of 131,610, an increase of 11·7 per cent. on the corresponding week of the previous year. In the ten years of which we are writing, the expenditure from poor-rates, under the head of "relief of the poor only," rose from £862,261 to £1,175,363.

These serious facts recently led to a Conference on Pauperism and Crime, under the presidency of the Earl of Shaftesbury. The whole discussion turned on a paper by Dr. Hawksley, in which he indicated both the facts and the remedies. The following is a summary of this able paper. He said that, taking into account the money distributed by the various charitable institutions of London, the assistance realised by means of public and private benevolence, and the allowances given by the State, as much as £7,000,000 was given away yearly with the object of relieving the distress or suppressing the crime of the metropolis. This vast sum of money, if well dispensed, would well and lastingly provide for every case of distress that could be found within the metropolitan area. It had often been supposed that the distress of the metropolis had increased only in a fair ratio with its increase of population. This was a great mistake. He had found that during the last ten years the population of the metropolis had increased one-

sixth, whilst its pauperism had increased five-tenths, or one-half. Besides, he found that there existed 100,000 children in the metropolis destitute of proper guardianship, and exposed to the probability of their being trained as beggars or thieves. The latter sad fact was in itself a national disgrace of a most humiliating character. The causes of the apparent inability of the immense sum of money he had mentioned to meet the wants of the poor of the metropolis, and to check the crime that exists, were chiefly errors in method and the want of organisation. His suggestions were that the present poor-law system should be modified. There should be a more discriminating treatment of the adult poor. The aged should receive sufficient support at their own homes, and the sick also, except in cases of contagious diseases, or when the medical advisers thought the cases could be better treated at the hospital. The able-bodied should be put to some suitable work, that would make up to some extent for the expense which the relief they receive entails. All children found without proper guardians should be apprehended and sent to Industrial Schools, and if the parents of such children should be discovered, they should be made to pay some of the expenses attendant on the keeping of those children. He thought that, by means of the industrious habits that these children would acquire in such Schools, they could be made self-supporting. The difficulties in the way of the proper administration of the funds of the London charities he considered could be removed by the union of all the existing charitable resources, parochial, general, and private, and by means of district and central offices working in unison and in regular communication. By means of these offices persons applying for and receiving relief would become known to the dispensers of relief connected with these offices, and thereby all imposition on the charitably disposed, and on the public funds devoted to the relief of distress, would be well guarded against. The expense of this organisation could be easily realised by a small percentage levied on the funds of the various charities.

Already some good has sprung from this conference on the growth of pauperism, especially in relation to those travelling vagrants whose home is the casual ward, and who travel from workhouse to workhouse on a regular plan until they have traversed the whole kingdom. Thus a circular has been issued by the Poor Law Board to various unions throughout the country, drawing the attention of the guardians to the existing system of relieving

vagrants, and suggesting several reforms. The Board suggests that the name and occupation of each applicant, with the place whence he comes and the place whither he is going, be recorded in a book of reference; that the applicant should forthwith (except when ill) be put in a bath; that as far as practicable he should be lodged in a separate cell; and that the performance of a sufficient task should be required before he set out in the morning. The Board point out the advantage of providing a uniform scale of diet and task work in the casual wards throughout the country.

It scarcely comes within the province of this magazine to discuss Dr. Hawksley's suggestions for the *organisation of charity;* for our task is rather, by means of Ragged Schools, to prevent the habits of pauperism or crime in juveniles. This led Lord Shaftesbury, in winding up the discussion, to strike the key-note of the remedies for pauperism when he "drew particular attention to the good work yearly done in the metropolis by means of Ragged Schools, and such institutions as the training-ship Chichester. He believed that if sufficient money were forthcoming, the ship Chichester could be made the means of converting thousands of our street Arabs into excellent boys for our navy. The principal thing that had to be done to improve the moral and physical position of the poor was, first of all, to see after their domiciliary condition, and then to train them to industrial habits." For it is clear that, if we can but *catch* the children, we shall save them from the pauper's life and the pauper's grave. In many cases we have done this; for, happily, the education given in Ragged Schools does not merely regard Eternity—though that is the primary object of every earnest teacher. Thus, by secular and industrial training, we strive to instil those principles of true independence which lead men never to lean on a human crutch when they can help themselves.

If, then, Ragged Schools have not effected all that could be wished, who can possibly estimate the amount of good they have accomplished in keeping down *hereditary* pauperism, by destroying the pauper habit of resting on others? But how much more good would have been accomplished if, in addition to greater pecuniary aid, there had been more personal service. The fact that there are still so many thousands outside the London Ragged Schools—not for want of room, but for want of voluntary teachers—points to a seed-plot of pauperism or crime from which a fertile crop must be reaped. Let it not be forgotten that though these neglected

children are outside Ragged Schools, still they are not without education; for those who are not trained for God will undoubtedly be educated by Satan.

But whilst we record this increase of pauperism and utter failure of charity, we are not disposed to join in the cry of despair which has come from so many newspapers. Rather would we seek to learn why and wherein we have failed, and so base our future plans on wiser principles. There may be some who, "weary in well doing," may be tempted to retire from the battle with pauperism and crime, and thus leave the victory with Satan. But to this class no faithful Ragged School worker can belong. The Gospel is not yet dead; yea, it is now winning some of its richest trophies amongst our social outlaws. Let it, then, be taught from house to house—in Ragged School and Ragged Church—by men who have faith in the Holy Ghost, and the dark shadows gathering over our fatherland will vanish for ever.

REST FOR WEARY WORKERS.

By A. L. O. E.

It is obvious that a week of perfect rest in the country would not only afford delightful recreation to Ragged School teachers (either voluntary or paid), but be likely to recruit both health and spirits, and send them back with renewed vigour to their difficult work.

A very simple method of giving this benefit to a limited number of workers for God has occurred to my mind.

In the pleasant hospitable home of Mrs. Hawkins, of Elm Cottage, Sutton, Surrey, a City Missionary last year passed four weeks, with benefit to his health, tried by hard work amongst the poor in London. Mrs. Hawkins keeps a dairy; the situation of her cottage is remarkably healthy, and the country around it rural, and being one who herself loves the Great Master, Mrs. Hawkins would not only conscientiously, but joyfully, seek to make their visits pleasant to Ragged School teachers who might come under her roof. *Twenty-four* weary workers in succession might enjoy the benefit of a week in the country under these advantageous circumstances, from March 20th to October 16 (six weeks being omitted, during which time Mrs. Hawkins would require her spare room for members of her own family). The cost of these twenty-four weeks would be £14 8s., Mrs. Hawkins' terms being 5s. a week for a room, 7s. for board with her family. The invited teachers would incur little expense for travelling, a railway-ticket from London Bridge Station to Sutton (third class) only costing eleven-pence.

I feel so strongly the amount of good which a week in the country might do to some of our most valuable workers, that I am willing this year to con-

tribute a sixth part of the sum required (£2 8s.), if the remaining twelve pounds can be collected before the 1st of March. Twenty-four cards of invitation might then be prepared in some form like this, the Secretary of the Union filling up the blanks left for the dates.

"——— ——— is cordially invited to spend a week at Elm Cottage, Sutton, Surrey, from Saturday, ———, to Saturday, ———.

"Afternoon train from London Bridge to Sutton starts at —— p.m.

"N.B. Elm Cottage is on the Sutton road, about a mile and a half from the station."

Donors to the little fund for "Rest for Weary Workers," would for each 12s. given, have the privilege of presenting a card of invitation to some Ragged School teacher *selected by themselves*. But I, for my part, should place my four cards in the hands of the Secretary, Mr. Gent, whose large experience would enable him to judge so much better than I could, which amongst hundreds of teachers most need, and most merit, the proffered treat.

Some of those who receive invitations may be married persons, who would doubly enjoy a holiday if shared with a husband or wife. Mrs. Hawkins would willingly, in such cases, accommodate the partner, but as the *invitation* would be restricted to the actual worker, the 7s. extra for the board of the second party would have to be defrayed by the individual.

Those to whom Providence has given the means of quitting a London residence for awhile, usually deem it essential to health to seek some change of air and scene during the year, though their homes may hold every luxury, and their strength suffer from no strain. To such I would earnestly appeal in behalf of "weary workers," who, in the close atmosphere of school-rooms, crowded with the poorest of the poor, labour month after month, year after year, to teach the ignorant, and by so doing stem the torrent of infidelity and vice.

I will only add that it will afford me hearty pleasure to be called upon to contribute my sixth of the moderate sum required; and that it will enhance my own enjoyment of the country not a little, if I am enabled to show, through the simple arrangement proposed, kindly hospitality to the "weary workers," who are freely spending their time and strength in feeding the Saviour's lambs.

DUBLIN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The following sketch of the Dublin Ragged Schools is extracted from "Golden Hours." It is from the pen of Miss Whately, daughter of the late Archbishop of Dublin, who, with her sisters, pioneered the Irish movement:—

In many parts of the continent, Romanism with the masses is merely practical infidelity, with a thin cloak of outward ceremonial; in Ireland it is thoroughgoing, hearty, intense attachment to the whole creed of the Council of Trent. For many years Protestants and Roman Catholics in Ireland were like two separate nations. War was carried on often in a spirit of virulent partisanship, but no attempt was made to win over converts to the

side of scriptural religion. Then began, early in the century, the quiet and unpretending but blessed efforts of several agencies to introduce the Bible to the people. These agencies were productive of much benefit, and they prepared the way for a more direct missionary work.

That work, under God's providence, commenced in Dublin in connection with nearly the first attempt to introduce Ragged Schools on a large scale among the lowest and most ignorant of the population. It began with a few children gathered together in a little back room, and now, after fifteen years' labour, that small beginning has swelled into a mighty stream. There are now four distinct institutions, with Day Schools for all ages and both sexes attached to each, and including Normal Schools for masters and mistresses, a Boys' and Girls' Home, and three large Sunday Schools. These are attended quite as numerously by adults as by children; and it is a striking sight, on a Sunday afternoon, to look on the large rooms filled with groups of the poorest of all ages, grey-headed old men, careworn women with their babes on their knees, tall, active lads, with sometimes a stray sailor or soldier, and half-clad men and women—with faces upturned in eager attention, listening to the instructions of the teachers, who sit each in the midst of a little group, the service ending with general questions, a hymn heartily joined in, and prayer, the whole motley assembly attending in the most orderly manner. Every night of the week, except Saturday and Sunday, an inquiring class for reading, prayer, and friendly discussion is held.

One feature impresses and sometimes alarms a visitor—the free, open manner in which the points of difference between Romanism and Protestantism are discussed and commented on. The stranger will be disposed to take fright and say, "Will not this displease Romish hearers?" We know that there are countries in which a different mode of proceeding has been found advisable; but certainly in Ireland the course we are describing has been and is found to suit the times and the people. No bitterness or harshness is allowed—everything is carried on in a spirit of friendly discussion; and even if questions be asked, which on paper might seem offensive, the lively, good-humoured manner of speaking takes away the sting. The Irish are a nation eminently fond of conversation and discussion—they understand the spirit in which it is carried on, and even those who continue Romanists will constantly frequent the classes and meetings, and take delight in the debates which occasionally arise. But these discussions are not the *end*, but the *means*—and only *part* of the means used: the *object* is to set forth Christ crucified, and points of difference are only noticed as they are found essential to explain the gospel to the hearers.

The Day Schools present also a striking picture—the pale faces pinched with hunger, the tattered clothing, and the bright, eager, intelligent faces—the rapid, clear, and correct answering on many subjects which might puzzle scholars of a higher class. But this is only part of the work. The boys and girls in the Dormitories receive a careful and thorough training, and are provided with situations. Six hundred girls have passed through since the commencement in 1855, and as far as can be traced, all are doing well. The boys enter houses of business as messengers, some go out as servants, or as apprentices to trades, and many enlist. Nine hundred have passed through the "Boys' Home" in this way, and numberless are the cheering and

encouraging evidences that the work has borne abundant fruit. The teachers can point to many holding situations of trust and winning the esteem of all around them by their good conduct; and many are the letters from soldiers and others stationed in foreign lands, clinging with a home affection to their old school and eagerly asking for tracts, &c., to distribute to their comrades whom they are anxious to lead to the truth which they have found precious to their own souls.

But the agency which connects all these various works, and brings them to bear upon the minds of the people, is a regularly organised and effective system of house to house visitation, carried on throughout the city of Dublin by a staff of active, zealous, and carefully trained city missionaries or scripture-readers. They occasionally meet with opposition and even violence, but usually their gentleness and patient firmness succeed in disarming all opponents; and we heard some time ago that two of them had been entreated with tears by ninety separate families (all Roman Catholics) to repeat their visits.

A few instances gathered at random out of many, will give some idea of the fruit which has already been reaped from this work. The principal reader has discovered and visited sixty-eight persons, all of whom seemed decided Christians, and all of whom traced their conversion to the Sunday School. Many have died in the most triumphant faith and hope.

Among these was a policeman, who, when off duty, had been led to enter the School from mere curiosity with his wife and daughters. He was struck by what he heard, received a tract, and eventually sent a message requesting the visits of the reader. Two years afterwards he was taken with his last illness. On his death-bed he was visited by the priest, to whom he spoke freely of his hope and comfort. As a devout Romanist, he said, he had been tormented by the fear and the uncertainty of what might be "the end of his journey," as he expressed it; but now he had found his Saviour, and was happy in the sense of pardon and peace with God. "I am ashamed to hear a respectable man like you speak that way," said the priest; "do you not know there is no salvation out of the Church?" "I know that, sir," replied the dying man, "but that Church is the Church of Christ." The priest turned pale, and left him in much agitation. The sick man requested his wife and children, and his missionary friend, to join in singing "Rock of Ages" by his bedside, and soon afterwards he departed in peace.

A young woman, accidentally picking up some of the handbills distributed by the readers which had been dropped by the way, was led by their perusal to study the scriptures. She is a servant in a respectable family, and has now induced her mistress also to read the Bible. On turning to the ninth of Hebrews the lady was much struck, and asked the missionary if the passage could be correctly rendered. On his proving to her that it was the same in both Bibles, she exclaimed, "Then there can be no mass!"

A sick woman in one of the poorest localities of Dublin was visited by two of the missionaries. She seemed at first inclined to repulse them, but the visits were repeated even after she recovered, and gradually her prejudice was overcome by the kind and gentle sympathy she received. Their simple and earnest remarks must have made more impression on her mind than she was herself aware of; for, some time subsequently, when dangerously ill in

a hospital, and believing herself near her end, her mind was impressed by a dream she had, that she ought to seek Protestant instruction. She recovered partially and left the hospital, and came to reside near one of the Schools, with a view of hearing more of the gospel teaching which had so struck her. The readers found her in a miserable tenement, lying on a bare brick floor; she was supplied with some straw, and efforts were made to get her again into an hospital; but some being full, and others under Romish influence, she was obliged to return to her wretched dwelling. But though the "outward man" sank under her hardships, the inner was "renewed day by day." She eagerly received the blessed gospel tidings, and one day the reader heard her reply to a Roman Catholic neighbour, "I am sick, poor, cold, and hungry; but I am very happy. The Lord has given me his Holy Spirit to comfort me." The "sisters of mercy" from a convent near called on her and offered her every comfort if she would give up her Bible and confess to the priest; but though the poor shivering frame longed for warmth and comfort, she had strength to persist in her refusal, and to endure a martyrdom, perhaps scarcely less trying, though less apparent, than those of former days at the stake. At last, all means of support failing, she was placed in the workhouse infirmary, where she still continues steadfast in the faith.

From time to time evening tea-meetings are held in Dublin, when the poorest and most utterly neglected are gathered in. Very touching is the testimony to the effect of these gatherings. "I am so sorry," said one woman, on returning to her husband, "you couldn't come. There was the most beautiful talk you ever heard, all about God, and Christ, and heaven, and the way to be saved." Another was so impressed by a few simple words spoken to her by a lady at one of these meetings, that she could not rest till she came to the School to learn more. An English Protestant sailor, who attended several classes and meetings, was eager to bear witness to the good he had derived from the instruction he heard. It enabled him in his turn to instruct his Roman Catholic wife, and was the means of her conversion.

The happy effects of the mission-work on the lives and characters of those thus brought under its influence are most striking. Many who were originally among its opponents have borne witness to the change in many of the worst districts of the city; even the outward appearance, poor as it still is, bears marks of a purifying and civilising influence.

But enough has been said to show that the mighty stream of evangelisation, which is working great things in so many distant lands, is doing also its work in a city where outward misery and an erroneous faith had apparently undisputed sway. And surely there can hardly be a greater triumph of gospel principles than when the strongholds of darkness are thus broken through, and we see that

> "There are, in this loud stunning tide
> Of human care and crime,
> With whom the melodies abide
> Of the 'everlasting chime.'"

A COUNTRY HOME FOR HOMELESS BOYS.

On December 22nd last, the Earl of Shaftesbury publicly opened a further extension of the now well-known admirable movement which originated at the memorable supper given to the homeless boys of London on February 14, 1866 (see vol. 18, p. 49), and which has for its object the excellent and much-needed one of reducing as much as possible the existing destitution and crime of the metropolis. There can be no doubt that the work undertaken by the committee who have sprung into existence since that now celebrated event is a great and important one, not only with reference to the children who are provided for through their instrumentality and the assistance of the benevolently disposed portion of the public, but for the country at large. For by the "Refuges" that have since been established a large number of these homeless little ones have been not alone saved from ruin, but have been trained for useful service—boys and girls who would but for this institution have very probably become a curse and an expense to the nation.

It appears that last year there were gathered from the streets into the Refuges as many as 246 boys. Up to the end of last month 310 were received, and for the 21 days of this month 50 more have been admitted, and still they come begging for shelter and protection. At the present time there are 160 boys on board the Chichester, being educated and trained for the royal navy and merchant service, 160 boys in the Great Queen Street Refuge, and 50 at the Country Home, and upwards of 100 inmates in the two Refuges for Girls.

With a view of further converting the "waste" going on in the human material, and turning it into useful labour, the committee purchased the Woking property, to which they purpose transferring the young and weakly boys from the London Refuge, so that they may be trained to look after cows and pigs, grow vegetables, till the land, &c., and be fitted for service at home or in the colonies. This effort was absolutely necessary, as there have been in the Refuge all the year more boys than there is proper accommodation for. The committee were therefore driven to this extremity, either to enlarge their operations or to send the poor boys adrift as they apply for admission. The committee therefore determined to enlarge their work, and take in another 100 boys, so as to have 400 altogether under their care, viz., 200 on the ship, 100 in this Refuge, and 100 in the Country Home. All that is now required to realise the money necessary to defray the cost of the building is £3,000.

The edifice which the committee have provided at Bisley, near Woking, Surrey, and which was opened under so many favourable auspices, seems to be in every way well suited for the requirements for which it is designed. A large number of ladies and gentlemen went down from London to inspect the new "Home" and to witness the opening ceremony. The first part of the ceremonial was to go through the new buildings. The inspection seemed to give general satisfaction. The new "Country Home" at Bisley consists of a centre and two wings connected together by corridors. The centre contains committee-rooms, store-rooms, dwelling apartments for the master, and infirmaries separated from the private apartments. The

left-hand wing contains a dining hall, with a spacious dormitory over head. In the rear are kitchens and offices erected as separate buildings, and in the rear of each of the wings are swimming baths and lavatories. The total frontage of the building is 150 feet. The total cost of the building is £5,775. The style of the building is the early Gothic. In the interior the best accommodation is provided for the hitherto sadly neglected little ones for whom the building has been erected and fitted up.

After the opening ceremonial, in which the Earl of Shaftesbury, one of the first and foremost in this praiseworthy movement, and Mr. Williams, the zealous secretary, to whose untiring exertions much of the success of the organisation is due, took prominent parts, the company adjourned to a large hall on the ground-floor, where a luncheon was laid out for their refreshment, and where several speeches were made in advocacy of the claims of the movement to the generous consideration and support of the public. Among the speakers were the Earl of Shaftesbury, who presided, Mr. Chas. Buxton, M.P., and Mr. Williams. The latter gentleman reviewed the progress which the movement has made during its short existence, and pointed out the great amount of public service it has rendered. He thanked the Earl of Shaftesbury for having proved such a good and constant friend of the movement, and hoped that other influential noblemen and statesmen would go and do likewise. Among the particulars given by Mr. Williams were, that the Girls' Refuge in connection with the movement was opened in 1852, the Boys' Refuge in 1858, another Girls' Refuge in 1860, the ship Chichester in 1866, a third Girls' Refuge in 1867, and the Boys' Refuge at Bisley, opened this day, in all of which the Earl of Shaftesbury had taken part.

The following case will give our readers some idea of the class for whom the Country Home is intended:—

The parents of this boy were living in Golden Lane, and were in great poverty. Fever broke out in the court where they resided. They took it, and being weak through insufficiency of food, were unable to stand against the attack, and were removed to the hospital, together with three of their children. The father died first, and the day he was buried the poor mother died. Thus the children in a few days were left orphans. The children survived the malady, and on recovery, found out to their sorrow that they had lost both parents. This boy was taken by an old grandmother. The poor aged woman obtained a few shillings a week by doing a little needlework or washing, and often deprived herself of food to give to the child. In the winter she was overtaken with sickness, and she and the little fellow were in consequence reduced to the greatest state of privation. One after another of the few articles in the room had to be parted with for food, and the very morning the boy was received into the Refuge, the poor woman had sent the child out with an old chair, which was sold for 8*d*. The proceeds of the sale of this chair obtained something for breakfast, but when this meal was gone they knew not where to look, or expect the next. It was just after this meal had been partaken of, that the case was brought before the attention of the committee, when they admitted the poor boy at once into the Refuge. He was in a very weak and emaciated condition; but now with proper food and care, which he has received in this institution, he is getting strong, and now that the Country Home is open he will be transferred there-

EVANGELISATION OF LONDON.

On Monday evening, the 4th of January, an important meeting was convened at Freemasons' Hall, to consider the need and the best plan of bringing home the gospel to those masses in London who are still outside any communion. At that gathering, which was largely attended by Christians of every denomination, an earnest address on the "Evangelisation of London" was delivered by Mr. Robert Baxter. In the course of his remarks he said that—

One million of persons out of the three in London are suffering under continued depression of trade, and out of these tens of thousands are in the deepest distress. We had last winter—and I fear we may have the same state of things this winter—men and women dying of want amongst us. What is the religious condition of London? I admit there is a higher moral tone here than in any other capital of Europe. I would not depreciate what the gospel has done, even among those who do not receive it, by raising the tone of society; we have a higher standard of morality than others. The gospel, too, has free course throughout London; there is no part of it where a preacher may not deliver his message. It has been said that a million of persons in London never enter a place of worship. I believe the number is overstated, because it has been shown that on the average only sixty persons in a hundred can attend public worship at the same time. If we say half a million we shall, in my judgment, be nearer the mark; but assuming that half a million persons in this city never attend a place of worship—what a fearful fact! Whole districts are living like the heathen. I can take you to whole districts of London where you may search in vain for any trace of Christianity in the countenance or manners of the people, or in their way of living. I can show you other streets full of the criminal classes.

The question arises, What are the causes of the misery we see around us? First, drinking. We have planted our streets with buildings into which the unwary are decoyed. How often have poor women said to me, "If my husband could come from work without passing the gin-shop he would bring his wages home!"

Next to drinking as a source of sin and misery we must reckon the facilities for pleasure which this city affords. The inducements to criminal pleasure ruin thousands. Then the isolation of classes in London is another source of misery. The rich man lives in the country. He comes to London daily to do his business, and goes back again to his home; what does London receive of his wealth, his prayer, his sympathy? The poor are left to themselves, in their poverty, their ignorance, their wretchedness, none of the rich living among them to take up their case and bring it before the Lord.

The second part of our subject is, "What the Lord is doing." There is the settled ministry in the Establishment and out of it. There are also 400 city missionaries, 200 scripture-readers, 200 Bible-women, and 200 open-air missionaries, in all 1,000 agents outside of the churches. What is there beyond? God has put it into the hearts of his people to hold theatre services, and thousands who never attended any place but the theatre, and that for pleasure, now come to the theatre for worship. I have already said there are 200 open-air preachers who give a portion of their time to the work of the gospel. What are these men doing? They stand up and proclaim the gospel to the people, and as God gives his blessing to souls they send those souls out to visit others, to read to them or to gather them together

to hear the Word of God; and thus from these places as centres go out many preachers and other labourers for Christ. Again, there are 100 others, who are working for the Lord. Many men of business in this great city, after their weary hours of daily labour, are working for God. "But what would the Lord have us all to do?" And when we measure the degree of effort as compared with our privileges, how fearful is the failure.

We have three millions of people, among whom there are about 1,200,000 heads of families. If we say that one-half of these are professing Christians, we have 600,000 persons professing to be the Lord's. If we assume that, of that number, one in every hundred have really given their hearts to the Lord, and belong to him, there would be 6,000 labourers for Christ in London. Where are they? I speak of voluntary labour. I bless God for those who labour for him, and are paid for it—the labourer is worthy of his hire—but what we want now is for Christian men and women generally to arise and accept the service which God gives to them. The people of God are sitting at home with folded arms, while thousands are perishing around them. This is the crime, the sin for which the Lord will visit us. Oh, it is not enough to give the silver and gold for missionaries and Bible-women; the Lord asks more than that, he asks ourselves, he requires that we should ourselves labour with a whole heart for him who redeemed us with his own blood. He gave himself for us, and we ought to give ourselves for him. Let us ask ourselves what would be the state of London if even 6,000—even one in a hundred—of professing Christians were going forth with the Bread of Life. Do you measure it? What would this city be if 6,000 men and women filled with the Holy Ghost were multiplying the means used now for the salvation of souls?—but oh, dear friends, the guilt is on our heads, the blood of the dying is on us. What would the Lord have us to do?

RESCUED FROM THE WORKHOUSE.

As workhouses are now managed—especially the mixture of the moral and immoral, the Christian and the ungodly—it is always sad to hear that any true disciple of Jesus has been compelled to find a home in the union in old age. Many such cases we have known; some of them being members of our Mothers' Meetings, or of Ragged Churches, where they first learnt, like Mary, to sit at the feet of Jesus. Nothing could be more painful than for them to have to leave the company of a Christian lady—a true pastor without the name—to have for their associates degraded women, whose talk is as foul as were their past lives. It is true that in some cases they are visited by city missionaries, or by the members of the "Christian community;" but such visits, being rare, are but as a ray of sunshine, which scarcely transpierces the moral "darkness which may be felt." Many, too, of these poor men and women are so infirm and ill, that they need bodily comforts, such as the dietary of a workhouse cannot supply; to say nothing of that sympathy which cannot be had from those who are sinking under similar ailments.

We are glad, then, to find that a plan has been recently devised by Mrs. Sheppard, of Fromefield, Frome, to check this growing evil. This is done by

the formation of cottage homes for old men and women, whose friends are too poor to keep them away from the uncongenial society of a workhouse.

We are also glad to learn that the same principle is applied to boys, most of them fatherless, who must otherwise have been sent to the workhouse. Removed from the vicious surroundings of a workhouse, they bid fair to become good citizens, instead of increasing that hereditary pauperism which is so often traceable to workhouse training. If similar cottage homes be opened for girls, we think the benefits of this plan would be materially increased. For serious as are the evils incident to workhouse training on boys, they are infinitely increased in the case of girls. This statement is confirmed by the case-books of every Magdalen Asylum and Female Reformatory. If, then, girls' cottage homes be added, the plan will be complete, and female vice and crime much decreased!

The plan adopted is thus described by the founder of these cottage homes:—"I take a small cottage with two or three nice bedrooms, and, buying a few second-hand bedsteads, and beds, and new bed-clothes (costing about £2 a bed), I place four or five aged men or women out of the workhouse there. Generally one of the number is able to light the fire and make the beds daily, and I arrange for the scrubbing and washing to be done by others; this and firing is all my expense, and the old creatures live most comfortably on the 2s. 6d. or 2s. 9d. given by the parish as outdoor relief; whereas, if they had each to pay for lodging, attendance, firing, and washing out of the 2s. 6d., they must be in the union. I have now thirty-three thus enjoying life and liberty, able to totter to their own accustomed place of worship, to see their own friends, to suit their feeble appetites with some penny delicacy at the moment of wishing for it, instead of the heavy uniform dietary of the workhouse, unfitted for the old and feeble. Surely, if I can do this for thirty-three old folk in one town, aided by kindly gifts from friends, surely every village in England might rescue its aged poor from the dreaded workhouse, or save them from going in by the addition of 6d. or 1s. weekly to the out-door pay they receive, and which is never denied to a worthy and sober old person.

Then, again, I have a Home for workhouse boys on somewhat the same plan as the Hon. Mrs. Way's, at Brockham, where they are received as soon as they can get employed in the town as factory or errand boys; ten to fifteen boys are here lodged and cared for by a dear motherly woman, who mends and washes for them, and makes them a 'Home.' They pay me one shilling per week for this, and feed themselves out of their earnings. In a few weeks they lose the pauper badge, and I should be proud to show any one my fine lads—all of them in my daughter's Sunday class in our servants' hall—a class which God has indeed vouchsafed to honour, for two have given themselves to his work among the heathen, one of whom, once a workhouse boy, is now an ordained clergyman of the Church of England in New Zealand; another, a weaver's son in our village, is about to enter at Islington. Several of the workhouse boys are in service; others, who came to me eight years ago, are married and doing well, and very few have given us trouble.

I attribute this, under God's blessing, to the gentle care and womanly supervision at 'the Home,' and to the softening and refining influences of

the happy Sunday classes. May I then hope that you will thus allow me to suggest to English hearts two modes of inexpensive relief from the crying evils of the workhouse system, as at present known and practised?—a system where the word 'loving-kindness' is ignored, either as regards the aged, under cruel pauper nurses, forgotten and unthought-of by those who ought to tend them ere they die, as our grand-parents would have done, or as regards the boys and girls, mostly orphans, of our large and well-taught workhouse schools, but who grow up without one to love or care for them, or to say a kindly word of blame or praise, but, hustled out into a cold and wicked world, perish here and hereafter for a lack of a little gentle training.

I would willingly reply to any queries which might reach me, and tell also of the 'fallen girls,' and the little workhouse drudges, who may be cared for in their small places of service, and kept thus from filling our midnight streets with wretched female dregs of our Union schools."

HOW? AND HOW MUCH?

A MINISTER closed his address "On Giving" to an assembly thus:—

"There is no explicit, uniform, universal rule in the New Testament for giving to God. A Patriarch gave a *tenth*. A Jew above *two-tenths*. Zaccheus would give the *half* of his goods. Many of the Christians at Pentecost gave their *all*. Every man is left at liberty to take his grade and rank of Christian nobility and generosity; and that remains his position and rank for ever."

A minister went away fired with the sentiment, and resolved to let it influence his life and ministry. He presently met a friend, and exhorted him to large-hearted liberality, dwelling much on the blessed privilege of giving to the Lord. Meeting him afterwards, he asked if he had acted on his advice. His friend replied that, "when about to present his offering to God, he felt it was not large enough. He then doubled it; but feeling that it was still too small, he doubled it again; and then he gave it to God with joy."

True, there is no exact, uniform, universal measure for giving—as a *twentieth*, a *tenth*, a *fifth*, a *half*, or any other proportion, to which all must conform. The gospel does not bind its converts by stern, uniform rule. It leaves them at liberty to decide for themselves. Yet is their liberty not the liberty of license to do nothing, but the liberty of intelligent decision and grateful love. It is liberty to give "as God hath prospered," and for each to act "as he purposeth in his heart."

With those who truly live for God themselves, and who devote their possessions to his glory, the sentiment, "All belongs to God—why ask a proportion for him?" is the very natural and beautiful reply when *proportionate* giving is urged. The Christian ought, indeed, to acknowledge that all he has is the Lord's, and to act as a faithful steward in the expenditure of what the Lord has intrusted to him; but precept needs to be reduced to practice. Selfishness is continually acting on him; and, therefore, a

substantial proportion of his income ought to be *first and certainly* devoted to the Lord.

Let the Christian reader, then, consider his infinite obligations to the love of Christ in redeeming him from sin and destruction.

Let him reflect on the Saviour's claims on the devotedness of his whole heart, and on every power and faculty he possesses.

Let him seriously weigh the urgent necessities of millions of men calling for his compassionate sympathy and largest aid, during his *one* brief, mortal life.

Let him solemnly determine whether he will live for self-indulgence, as a child of earth; or whether, as a follower of Christ, he will forego present enjoyment for the eternal welfare of men, and the glory of Christ.

Christian reader, you cannot but admire the noble spirit of the apostle—"The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live *should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again*" (2 Cor. v. 14, 15).

Let your admiration, then, kindle into imitation! May you be found a faithful steward! Consider it your greatest privilege to be able to give to the Lord. And let your giving be, not from a momentary impulse, but from *a fixed, abiding purpose.* Lay by periodically a proportion of your income for the Lord—Scripture says *weekly*, "as God hath prospered you." (See 1 Cor. xvi. 2.) "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. ix. 7).

Poet's Corner.

THE OUTCAST.

I saw, upon the world's highway
A child of misery:
Too sunk in vice to praise or pray
Or live by honesty:
And many a one came there along,
And pass'd him, heedless, in the throng.

The young, the old, the grave, the gay,
The rich in this world's wealth,
All passed him by, in long array
Of beauty, pride, and health.
Yet none held forth a hand to save
The outcast from a felon's grave.

But one there came, scarcely less poor,
Scarcely less poor than he;
Who ne'er sent mis'ry from her door
Without some sympathy.
"Come, helpless little one," she said,
"And learn to gain thy daily bread."

She took him to the Ragged School—
That refuge for the worst;
Then soon he learnt, 'neath Christian rule,
To bless where once he cursed.
No more in sinful paths he trod
But gave his heart, his all, to God.

Reader, wert thou that blessed one
Who lent the helping hand?
Say, if thou canst, that thou hast done
Thy Saviour's great command?
Oh, if that Saviour's love you prize,
Go henceforth, and do thou likewise!

George Street Ragged School. T. R. F.

Teachers' Column.

A MODEL SUPERINTENDENT.

BY THE REV. ALFRED TAYLOR.

He is a good superintendent, and therefore successful. A man of intelligence, and of some degree of information. He was not elected because of his being a deacon, or a bank director, nor because he was the oldest, the youngest, the most popular, or the best-looking man in the church. The teachers chose him because of his fitness for the duties of the office.

When he was elected, he did not consume half an hour of the time of the meeting in poor apologies and regrets at not being able "to perform in a proper and satisfactory manner the laborious and responsible duties of the high station and important position in which, by their unanimous and most complimentary action, they had placed him." Nor did he suggest that Mr. Fidgety, Mr. Heavy, or one of the other candidates who did not get a single vote, could fill the office better than he could. He went at it like an honest man and a Christian.

Regularly and with punctuality has he persevered in the work. He keeps sound shoes and a good umbrella, and is not compelled to stay at home on rainy days. You can set your watch by his opening and dismissal of the school. He does not forget that the whole body of teachers, old and young, will come late if he is late, and that if he is punctual they will all, excepting two or three incorrigibly heedless ones, be punctual too.

When he arrives at school, it is understood that he has come with a definite purpose, and not to let things straggle along the best way they can. With courteous firmness he goes about the business of the school. He as pleasantly as possible corrects what is wrong, according to the best of his ability. By some apparent magic he smooths down the crusty teacher, and quiets the turbulent one. He has succeeded in bringing to naught the plans of Mr. Books, the librarian, who in two years has invented fifteen new ways of keeping the library, each worse than its predecessor. He has quieted Mr. Whimsick, the singing man, who bought all the new tune books as soon as published, and insisted that the school should sing them all through. And yet he keeps all these people in a good humour. The boys and girls love

him, even if he is a pretty strict disciplinarian. They know that if they are good scholars, discipline will not be exercised on them.

He is neat in his ways. You can examine the record of the school since his election, and find a well-kept and correct history of its transactions. There is a general air of tidiness, and absence of boisterous doings, throughout all the affairs of the school. The whole concern goes like well-oiled clockwork.

Not many speeches are heard from the lips of this superintendent, but whenever he opens his mouth he says something worth remembering. He does not talk against time, nor utter great swelling words when he has nothing to say. When a stranger visits the school, burdened with an address which must be delivered, he endeavours to choose between the man who will instruct the children and the one who will only utter long strung nonsense. Sometimes, however, he makes a mistake, and allows Mr. Windywordy to have his say, but is careful not to invite him again.

As a good engine-driver understands everything, from driving the engine to oiling the wheels, and can give wise directions to those whose duty it is to attend to these things, so our superintendent can preside, keep order, teach any class that may be without a teacher, look after the library, and even take the place of the doorkeeper in case of necessity. Not that he does all these at once, or any one of them in a way or at a time to interfere with others in the discharge of their duty. But he can do them all, and the teachers and scholars know it, and the knowledge does not hurt him in their eyes.

If he were not a man of prayer, he would find it impossible to attain this excellence. But he is in the habit of constant and earnest prayer. Not only are his public prayers well uttered, and edifying to those who are to join in them, but they come from his heart, and God hears them. In his private devotion the school is often the subject of his petitions. He prays that the children may be converted, that the teachers may with humble faithfulness do their duty, and that he may have God's grace and guidance to enable him to be faithful in what he has to do. The spirit of prayerful earnestness is infused into all he does.

Persevering energy takes him and the school safely through many difficulties which might otherwise cause a wreck. His school prospers. The neighbouring schools and churches call it a model school, and ask for instructions as to the peculiar system by which it is managed. They hardly believe when they are told that there is no wonderful *hocus-pocus* about it, but that it is only a school conducted with prayerful zeal, order, and simplicity, by a band of wise and faithful teachers, under a good superintendent.

MR. PHONNY'S ADDRESS AS REPORTED BY A SCHOLAR.

THE superintendent of a Sunday School was questioning his pupils concerning the address given them in the morning.

"Children, what did Mr. Phonny tell you this morning?"

No answer was made. "Can't any one tell me what he said? Susie, can't you remember?"

Susie, a bright little girl of seven years, arose, and, with one finger in her mouth, bashfully lisped out,—"Pleathe, thir, he talked and he talked, and he thed ath how he loved uth, and he talked—and—and—we all thought he wath a-goin' to thay thumthing, but he didn't *thay nothing.*"

Those who undertake to address Ragged School children without having any thing to say may learn something from Susie.

Children's Gallery.

THE REMEMBERED PRAYER.

A BOY was brought up in a Sunday School. He was well behaved, but thoughtless. When he grew up he enlisted and fought the battles of his country. But he forgot the fight of faith; renounced the principles in which he had been brought up, and, in a foreign land, forsook his God.

He was wounded in battle. He lay gasping on the ground, burning with fever and parched with thirst, and he felt that he was unprepared for death. He thought, "God has now overtaken me for my sins; I am on the brink of eternity; I am about to stand before the bar of Christ. How shall I meet my Saviour, or rather my Judge? How shall I render an account of the things done in the body?" He tried to pray, but he had not uttered a prayer for six or seven years, and his heart seemed closed and his lips sealed. At length a prayer which he had learned when a boy at the Sunday School came into his mind. It just expressed the feelings of his heart; and he offered it up as his prayer to the God of mercy.

From that time he felt a hope that his life would be spared, and his sins pardoned.

He returned to his own land; and having heard a sermon was to be preached for the Sunday School he attended, when he passed the door where the money was being collected he put a sovereign in the plate. As it was supposed from his appearance that he could not afford to give so large a sum, inquiry was made, and the circumstances now stated were mentioned. He said that he had saved his pence till they had amounted to a shilling, and his shillings until they amounted to a sovereign, that he might give it as a memorial of his gratitude to God for the benefit which he had found from the short prayer which he had learned at that Sunday School.

S. E.

THE WELSHMAN'S KITCHEN.

THE Rev. John Todd said:—"When I stand in the pulpit before my own people on the Sabbath, I see before me an aged man in the gallery, for each Sabbath he is there; and the sight of him brings with it delightful associations.

In former days he resided in North Wales. There were no Christians in his neighbourhood. He wished to commence a Sunday School, but could find no better place than a back-kitchen. Here he weekly assembled his little flock, and, for eleven years, laboured alone, except with the aid of the scholars he had trained. Among his first pupils were two children of impenitent parents. These two girls had a little brother, to whom they were accustomed to teach what they learned in the Sabbath School. They were so interested in the Bible, that, being occupied in braiding straw as a business, they would first braid the length of the straw, then study a verse, then braid, and then study, so that they always came prepared with their Bible lesson.

Their instructor, a long time ago, emigrated to America, and this aged parishioner showed me a letter he had received from this scene of his early labours. The Sunday School is still taught here, not as before, in a *back kitchen*, but in a neat *house of God*. The minister of this sanctuary is a devoted man, labouring faithfully and successfully in his Master's vineyard. He is the 'little brother' of those 'little girls.'

His sisters are married. One is the mother of nine children, and lost her husband the last year by the falling in of a coal mine; but she had the happiness to know that, only the day before this event, he had renewedly consecrated himself to God. The minister lives contentedly upon forty pounds a year, happy in his home, happy in his people, happy in his Saviour—blessed of God, and blessing others.

This minister, this church, this flock, all sprang from that *Sunday School*. When I look upon my aged parishioner in the gallery, I cannot but reflect what a crown he has for his hoary head."

Correspondence.

INMATES OF MODEL LODGING-HOUSES.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—In your volume for 1868 (p. 244), you say that "the model lodging-houses do not meet the hard necessities of those who live from hand to mouth," and that "they only help those that can help themselves." This charge is reiterated by the public press, which says that "they are occupied by careful clerks, and by well-to-do managers of city houses." I can scarcely suppose that the latter statement is not an exaggerated one, for surely the workhouse appearance of these blocks of buildings would deter any decent clerk from becoming a tenant.

But whether this charge be true of those *commercial* model lodging-houses which expect a fair interest on the money expended, it certainly does not apply to the houses erected by the Peabody trustees. Thus Mr. H. G. Somerby, the active secretary of the Peabody trust, states that:—"I have obtained from the superintendents of the various blocks of buildings erected by the trust in various districts of London, returns of the occupants of every apartment, and the result shows the number of working men and labourers for weekly hire to be as follows:—17 shoemakers, 16 blacksmiths, 7 watchmakers, 2 brushmakers, 7 tailors, 7 painters, 1 glazier, 6 letter carriers, 12 policemen, 55 porters, 3 draymen, 14 dressmakers and needlewomen, 20 charwomen, 6 compositors, 2 millwrights, 1 staymaker, 1 gasmeter maker, 123 labourers, 4 shopmen, 1 upholsterer, 2 glasscutters, 5 coopers, 3 corkcutters, 1 beadle of a market, 3 boiler-makers, 1 beltmaker, 1 cook, 2 horse-keepers, 2 stevedores, 13 carmen, 2 time-keepers, 19 mariners, 4 rope-makers, 3 riggers, 1 milk-carrier, 1 brewer, 1 window-blind maker, 6 shipwrights, 3 engine-turners, 1 bricklayer, 3 tide-waiters, 2 ship-keepers, 3 lightermen, 1 tinplate-worker, 1 candlemaker, 4 carpenters, 2 bakers, 2 confectioners, 1 ship-scraper, 2 sailmakers, 5 bakers, 1 plumber, and 1 French polisher. The average wages earned by these various classes of working men is a fraction above 20s. a week. Some, such as the painters, glaziers, compositors, and millwrights, and others, get more when in full work; but as a rule only a proportion of them are fortunate enough to have continuous yearly employment. The lowest wages obtained by others in the Peabody houses is 9s. a-week. Out of their wages each has a family to maintain, which on an average consists of four or five individuals; and the rents they are charged are—for a single room, 2s. 6d.; for two rooms, 4s.; free of all rates and taxes. Each

of these tenements is furnished with cupboards for coal and other purposes, and an oven and boiler, with water convenient. There is gas in the passages, and baths, washing-rooms, and laundries for all the tenants. Even in the smallest of these tenements the occupant is subject to no restraint or intrusion, but is as fully master of his own home at all hours, as if he occupied a dwelling-house in one of the adjacent streets. It is superfluous to say that the income from rents is carried to the credit of the fund, and re-invested in the construction of further works."

It is thus seen that the bulk of the inmates of the Peabody Buildings, though slightly above the casual labour class, earn too little to pay the six shillings per week demanded for two rooms in London. They are thus of great benefit to an industrious class of men; and by their perfect sanitary arrangements they undoubtedly tend to preserve the health of the inmates, and thus both to lighten doctors' bills, and to enable them to keep in work longer than otherwise would be the case.

Yet still something more is wanting. Fish-hawkers and costermongers need healthy living-rooms—such as the friends of Perkin's Rents have provided. When this plan is generally adopted, and not till then, the casual labour classes will cease to live in dens, which are nothing less than fever-beds.

Yours, &c.,

QUARTUS.

THE LATE MR. J. B. DAY, OF STEPNEY.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—The Carr Street Ragged School was originally established in Lomas Buildings, Bull Lane, Stepney, in January, 1848. The premises consisted, according to the first Annual Report, of "a house, containing but two rooms, and a very small kitchen." Mr. J. B. Day was one of those who established it there, and from that date until last November he was the unwearying superintendent. He devoted every Sabbath evening, with very few exceptions, during the whole of that long period of nearly twenty-one years, to this "work of faith, and labour of love." He was a strict disciplinarian in maintaining order in the School, not sparing correction with the turbulent and unruly among the lads under his charge; and we have often heard the remark from visitors, "that the order in our School was far superior to most Sunday Schools."

To all the teachers he always exhibited a most genial and kindly bearing, administering reproof or advice in his naturally plain, outspoken, blunt way; but with a fatherliness which could not fail to command the esteem and regard of all. From his long connection with the School, in addition to his being by many years the senior of all engaged there, he had come to be regarded more as a father than a superintendent by us.

He was constant in his attendance at our Committee and Teachers' Meetings; where, while giving full expression to his pleasure at our temporal prosperity, and doing his best to aid it, he never forgot to enforce the paramount necessity of aiming at the conversion of the children.

Holding the position of guardian and vestryman, he made use of the connection thus formed for the good of our School. Thus he annually made a collec-

tion amongst them for the funds. In this way he collected a large sum last year towards the enlargement of the School. The esteem in which he had long been held by us was testified by the testimonial which we presented to him the year before last, and which I have reason to know he much prized, as showing the affection of his co-workers.

It will be difficult for us to supply his loss; but feeling that it is the Lord's work in which we are engaged, and not our own, we feel sure that "the Lord will provide."

Yours, &c.,

J. W. TAIT.

Notices of Meetings.

SERMON LANE.

THE twentieth anniversary of these Ragged Schools was held on the 22nd December, in the lecture-room of Islington Chapel. The Rev. J. T. Davidson presided.

Mr. W. H. Cæsar, the hon. secretary, read the Report, in which the committee stated that the progress of the Schools had given satisfaction to all those officially acquainted with their working. He remarked, as they had done in former years, that they only aimed at an elementary secular instruction; religious teaching occupied a prominent place in the day's instruction. In the Day Schools the admissions during the year had been—boys 63, girls 42, infants 33; total 138. The average attendance had been—boys 100, girls 59, infants 31; total 190. During the year 1 boy had been apprenticed, 23 boys and 8 girls have gone to places, 14 to Roman Catholic schools, 21 to national and pay schools, 12 have removed to the country, 48 to other parts of London, and 1 has died. The Week Evening Class for young people unable to attend the Day School has been conducted two evenings a week during the winter and spring months; the average attendance was 25. In the Sunday Schools, which are conducted morning and evening, the average attendance was 60. Meetings of the parents of the children, of the elder boys and girls, and of the old scholars, had been held. Entertainments and lectures had also been given. The Schools have, in connection with them, a Circulating Library; a Patching Class, in which boys and girls are taught to mend their own clothes, with an average attendance of 70; a Children's Provident Fund, with 74 depositors, and £5 15s. 4d. deposited; a Mothers' Class, with a weekly average attendance of 27; and a flourishing Penny Bank, in which £122 7s. 1d. had been deposited.

The financial state of the charity was stated to be satisfactory, the year having closed with a small balance to the credit of the School. The receipts during the year had been £140 17s. 9d., and the expenditure £139 6s. 6d. On last Boxing-day 130 of the children had a Christmas dinner.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. J. Anderson; J. C. Geikie; Mr. E. J. Hytche; and Messrs. Harvey and Matthews.

SHOREDITCH.

THE annual meeting of the friends and subscribers to the Shoreditch Ragged Schools was held recently in the Shoreditch Town-hall; Mr. Charles Reed, M.P., in the chair.

About 600 little boys and girls, attendants at the New Inn Street, Bateman's Row, and Motley Street Schools, occupied the floor of the hall. The other parts of the spacious hall were filled with the friends of the Ragged Schools.

Mr. Candler read a satisfactory Report for the past year, and after the children had sung the hymn, "Thank God for the Bible," the Chairman addressed the meeting. He said their object was to consider how best they could make happy the poor children before them. To be poor might be a misfortune, as far as children were concerned, but it was scarcely ever their fault. But ragged children who went to Ragged Schools were as good as any other children, if they loved their teachers and desired to learn. These Schools were for the children of the poor who had not time or means to educate them. They were not to look to the Government or to outside agencies to enable them to do that, but they were themselves to help parents to do it. They wanted a religious basis for the education of their children; and he could not think they would ever adopt in this country a system of education so secular that the Bible would not be the great text-book of our Schools. He apprehended that secular Schools, to be consistent, must have teachers who had no distinct religious opinions, or who, having had them, put them aside. The teacher must know the only true foundation for education was to be found in religious truth. The honourable gentleman concluded by making an earnest appeal on behalf of the Schools. The children then sang a selection of hymns and melodies, after which each of the little ones received a present from a gigantic Christmas tree, literally bending under the weight of bonbons, which was placed at the back of the chair.

SOUTHAMPTON.

THE annual tea and public meeting in aid of the Southampton Industrial Ragged Schools was held at the Victoria Rooms.

The Right Hon. W. F. Cowper, M.P., presided.

The Report stated that in the Sunday School the attendance had largely increased, and now averaged 75 as last year and against 52 the year before. The Sunday scholars increased proportionately with the day, and nearly one-half who are under week-day instruction attend the Sabbath School. Most of the other children attend the Sunday Schools of their various places of worship. The Evening School which, two years ago, had entirely ceased from the want of voluntary teachers, had been continued from last year, with an increase of from 20 to 30, or nearly 40 per cent. The Report further stated that the industrial department is in a good condition, and by its reorganisation, two years ago, has largely contributed to the great improvement in the Day School. The paper-bag making and tailoring are carried on with little variation from last year. The Dormitory during the past year had given shelter and accommodation to fifty boys, and also to many adults, who, through lack of employment last winter, were compelled to wander from their respective homes in search of labour, and were only too thankful that such a comfortable bed and substantial breakfast awaited them at the Ragged School. The committee again took that opportunity of explaining that the meals were only given upon the condition that a sufficient amount of wood-chopping were done to entitle the worker to either breakfast or dinner. It was very pleasing to relate that many sailor boys had on their return voyages visited the Schools and asked after the welfare of the cause and the master, thus showing the lasting impression made by holding out a friendly hand in time of need. There were also many instances in which boys from the Schools had obtained situations, and fulfilled their duties with the greatest satisfaction to their employers.

The total receipts for the year ended June 30th, 1868, were £163 5s. 9d.; the expenditure, £181 16s. 3d.

The meeting was addressed by Revs. E. Simms, and J. G. Wright; Major-General Tryon, Captain Strutt, Mr. J. Polk, J.P., Alderman Coles, &c.

Papers, Original and Selected.

ITALIAN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

WHEN the first Ragged Schools were opened in London, about twenty-six years ago, the founders little expected that they would not only ultimately span the length and breadth of London, but become potent agents for the reclamation of the wild tribes of our great provincial cities. But much less did they anticipate that the precedent would be copied by the Christian philanthropists of continental and other lands. But our last year's magazine alone recorded the rise or progress of Ragged Schools in Holland, Italy, Egypt, India, and Ceylon; and there is scarcely a Protestant country where this social machinery is not more or less effectively worked—if not with the name, at least for the identical class, whom we endeavour to socialise and to save.

Nor has the work been a failure in those distant countries. But, by the grace of God, these schools for the outcast or the destitute classes have been found to be the only machinery adapted to reclaim the depraved juveniles of great cities. It is thus seen that the Gospel is not that effete thing some modern philosophers describe it to be, but that, after nigh nineteen centuries, it is as potent as when Christ taught the Gospel on the slopes of Olivet.

Social statistics prove that, with the exception of Spain, there is no nation so badly educated as Italy. Ruled for generations by kings who were only the instruments of the Papacy, in deference to the dogma, that "ignorance is the mother of devotion," they viewed education as their direst foe. Hence, when they did not avowedly keep back the Bible from the laity, there were few of the poorer classes who could even read; the bulk, indeed, not even knowing the letters of the alphabet. Thus it is stated that in united Italy, with a population of 20,000,000, there are not 3,000,000 who can write or even read.

This ignorance of their countrymen led some Italian exiles, about twenty years ago, to open a free Night School for organ-boys and image-sellers in Grevill Street, Hatton Garden. It was largely attended by the class for whom it was intended, although

the priesthood tried to put it down, even standing at the door to take down the names of those who disobeyed their command to leave it. This school, taught by Italian gentlemen, soon showed by its popularity that, if the poor boys of Italy cannot read their glorious literature it is due to priestcraft, and not to willing ignorance. We are glad, then, to find that strenuous efforts are being made by the present government to remedy this crying evil, by opening Day and Night Schools throughout Italy. Hence, in spite of priest or monk, it is hoped that before many years the poorest will be able to read their great national writers, Savonarola and Dante, and thereby learn that, at the best, Popery is but a caricature of the religion of Jesus. For our faith is, that superstition cannot stand before an open and a read Bible.

But, as usual, Christians were at work before the government interfered. It was not long after Naples was liberated from the sway of the son of the too notorious king Bomba, that some Christian men and women established a Ragged School in the Via Cavone. The illustrious Garibaldi gave it the warmest support from the outset, and under his auspices the children of the Lazzaroni class, who had hitherto been the tools of the priests, thronged the school. The school-room indeed was soon found to be too small for the applicants for admission; and the scenes outside were not unlike what may be witnessed outside any London Ragged School on Sunday evening, when the lambs are kept out because the shepherds are too few. There, as here, the united cry was, "Do let us in, teacher, we will be so good!"

As might be expected, the priesthood did not like this invasion of their territory, especially as the primary object of the founders being to save the soul, the Bible became the text book. By means of the confessional they sought to deter the mothers from sending their children to these Poor Schools, threatening them, if they persisted, with excommunication. Sometimes, indeed, they were not ashamed to find allies in the "roughs" of Naples, whom they hired to break the windows, or to inflict personal violence on the teachers. But the "Evangelicals," in the spirit of their Master, met violence with love, and only remonstrated where they might have invoked the terrors of the law—and at length the priests and their abettors thought it the wisest course to ignore this Ragged School, and thus all *outward* persecution ceased. The first part of the battle being won, the rights of conscience became tacitly sanctioned by the priesthood, as they undoubtedly were

protected by law. Since that time three other Ragged Schools have been opened in Naples, all of which have become centres of Gospel light in a city, the bigotry of whose women is only matched by the infidelity of its men.

The following statistics will show how many poor children come under the Christian care of the friends of the Gospel in Naples. Thus the parent Ragged School in the Via Cavone is attended by about 100 boys. Unhappily there is no provision for girls; but did the funds permit, more than this number of girls could be readily induced to attend; unhappily, however, the expense of the Boys' School is as much as the directors can raise. In the new school, planted in Magno Cavallo, there is an attendance of 176, of whom, we are glad to say, 54, or about one-third, are girls. The Asilo Garibaldi is attended by 40 boys and 65 girls. Another Poor School has recently been opened in another quarter of the city, which is attended by 140 boys and girls. This shows that no less than 521 are daily gathered for Gospel and secular instruction in the Ragged Schools of Naples. They are, in fact, so popular as to be overcrowded; and similar schools might be readily opened in the poorer quarters of that beautiful city, did the funds permit. And here it may be mentioned to their honour that, though the Evangelicals do not number many rich or great men in their ranks, the bulk, as in apostolic times, being of the labouring classes, yet they have subscribed so liberally out of their small means as to remind us of the encomium passed on the Christians of Macedonia (2 Cor. viii. 2), "their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." Never indeed did any people more show what "willinghood" can do than these Italian Christians.

This movement, we are glad to say, travelled to Leghorn about four years ago, and with similar indications of suitability to Italian needs, and, therefore, of progress. Thus we find that on the 1st November, 1867, these schools were attended by 173 scholars, whilst on the 31st October, 1868, they were attended by 181. The total number of scholars that attended these schools during the past year amounted to 318. Although many, especially the scholars in the Infant School, did not continue for any length of time, yet it is encouraging to think that while there some seeds of truth were sown in their young hearts which may not be forgotten in after life.

These schools consist of four classes—the Infant School, for children under eight years of age, which is at present attended by

69 children. The Intermediate School, for those who have passed that age, but are unable either to read or write, and are therefore unfit for attending the higher classes, is attended by 50 children. The Girls' School, where the usual branches of a Christian education are taught, is attended by 35 scholars; and the Boys' School, at present attended by 27 pupils.

Immediately on the opening of these schools, about four years ago, the priests opened a Boys' School next door to the Evangelical School, and they intend to open a Girls' School in the immediate vicinity. There are other parts of the town where such a school is much more required, but by opening schools in these localities their opposition to the Evangelical work could not be so clearly manifested. Had the committee of the Evangelical schools the funds, they would open another school in the opposite extremity of the city, where many children are being brought up in the midst of ignorance and misery. But as these institutions are supported by private subscriptions and the proceeds of an annual bazaar, we regret to say that they have not been able to carry this plan into execution.

Similar schools are a branch of the Evangelical agency in Venice. A short time ago they were attended by 50 pupils, but now the number amounts to 70. In addition to the master, there are two female assistants, who instruct the girls in various industrial branches. An Evening School is about to be opened for older children and adults whose education has been neglected, and who are unable to attend the Day Schools. On the evening of the day on which a new church was opened, a Christmas-tree was prepared for the children who attend these schools. About 75 children, with from 400 to 500 spectators, were present. Addresses were delivered to the children, who, after having sung some hymns and received some little presents, were sent away delighted with the manner in which they had spent the evening. The parents and friends were equally pleased with the order and intelligence displayed by these scholars.

Like the Ragged Schools of Great Britain, these Poor Schools of Italy are upheld by Christians of various denominations, and the object being to leaven the poorer classes with Gospel truth, rather than to enlarge their own communion, the Bible is the text book. The secular elements are, of course, not omitted, but still the great aim of the founders is to teach the cardinal truth—that this world is but a preparatory school for the world which is to come.

Consequent on this, all the paid teachers are converted men and women. Some of them are members of that Waldensian Church, which was for long centuries the only centre of Gospel truth in Italy; and not a few are converted priests, who teach successfully because their very hearts are in the work.

We are glad to find that, as in British Ragged Schools, these Poor Schools have been the means of reaching many of the parents. Never would they have heard that it is Jesus, and not the Madonna, that saves, had it not been for the Gospel hymns taught at those schools, and sung at home by their children. By this means many have been led to cast in their lot with the despised "Evangelicals," and are living lives of such simple faith in Jesus as might put the bulk of English Christians to the shame. Thus have the Ragged or Poor Schools of Naples and Leghorn become stepping-stones to the Church of Christ on the part of adults once steeped to the lips in superstition or sin.

Our prayer then is, that Ragged or Poor Schools may be speedily planted in every city of that beautiful land, so long trodden under foot by the hoof of the Papacy. For, like our own beloved land, there is no great Italian city where a pariah class does not exist. It is for these poor victims of parental or social neglect that we plead. For we are sure that if Italy is to keep the liberties she has so well won, it can only be by receiving the truth as it is in Jesus. Their great liberator, Garibaldi, once said, holding up an open Bible, "This is the cannon to liberate Italy." And a greater than he, said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

PERSONAL HINDRANCES TO USEFULNESS.

BY THE LATE HENRY CRAIK, OF BRISTOL.

1. *Lack of living under the power of unseen realities.* Eternal joy and endless misery are terms frequently used, but how comparatively powerless are the corresponding ideas even upon the minds of true believers! To this defect may be traced the indifference with which we can regard the condition of our fellow-sinners, and even of our near friends and relatives, who know not God. Oh that grace might be given me to apprehend influentially the horrors of eternal woe, as well as the blessedness of everlasting glory! With this apprehension, how little would earthly sources affect me; how earnestly should I pray; how diligently should I labour; how seriously

and constantly should I have my conversation in the world as in the sight of God!

2. *Perversion of the doctrines of grace.* The moment any doctrine so operates as to make us little in earnest about souls, either the doctrine is false, or we are perverting it. Whenever, therefore, I find myself sinking down into a false security respecting the souls of others, from considering that none of the elect can finally perish, I am making an unscriptural use of the doctrine of election. The same authority on which I believe the doctrine, enforces as much earnestness about the salvation of sinners as if all depended upon our own exertions. I will then be a fool for Christ's sake. I will labour and pray as if all might be saved: and if any are brought to God, I will give all the glory to sovereign and distinguishing grace.

3. *Ignorance of our fit position in the Church*, and consequently of the work which we are called upon to fulfil. This ignorance must operate most injuriously upon our usefulness. In what state would a large household be if none of the servants knew what places they were expected to fill? Simplicity of purpose and prayer are the great means of removing this hindrance. But let us each seek to be like those of old, who knew what Israel ought to do.

4. *Being little convinced of our own helplessness.* As long as we think that we are fit for anything because of our gifts, zeal, or abilities, the Lord cannot honour us. This is the reason why there may be much zeal and labour, and yet no result of blessing; let each of us, then, who may be engaged in any part of service, examine ourselves on this point in particular. First, are we sensible that all our labours, etc., will come to nothing without the Divine blessing? Secondly, are we willing that, if fruit should be granted, the Lord may have all the glory?

5. *False humility*, which renders us unwilling to believe that God can use us for any good work. If we are unwilling to seek after a holy, prayerful life, we have no reason to expect to be used; but if, deeply conscious of sinfulness and helplessness, we are ever applying to the blood, and are keeping near the throne of grace, then the conscious unworthiness which we feel will be a great help to be vessels meet for the Master's use.

MISSION TO THE COSTERMONGERS.

HARTSHORN COURT RAGGED SCHOOL.

THE condition of the inhabitants of Golden Lane renders it deserving of attention. The old people there are steeped in wretchedness, the middle-aged and adult population is composed of persons who are either poor or belong to what is known as the "dangerous class," and the children run about half-naked, uncared for, and exposed to temptations of all kinds. The overcrowding of the neighbourhood is another source of terrible mischief. The majority of the people are addicted to excessive drinking, to obtain which they will at times part with everything saleable, and the pale, wan faces of the children show in unmistakable language how sad is the havoc caused by the parents' love of intoxicants. Where grown-up sons,

daughters, and little children live and sleep in the same room as their parents, no wonder that immorality and indecency prevail to a fearful extent, and the constant association of children with depraved characters leads to early crime and misery. Very few of the adults can read or write, and were it not for three Ragged Schools the children would grow up as ignorant as their parents.

The courts and alleys, indeed, are more thickly packed than ever with human beings, owing to the demolition of many small houses in other poor districts to make way for metropolitan improvements. Here are a few specimens:—

A family of five persons, with four dogs and a cat, live and sleep in a small room; in another is an old woman with eight cats; close by is a room where a family of seven live and sleep together, besides cooking and selling fried fish in the same apartment during the day. Another room is occupied by a jobbing tailor, his wife, and nine children; in another, a cobbler, with eight in family; and in two other small rooms, having only one outer door, are three men, four women, and four children, who carry on their trades and live and sleep together.

To remedy these evils a hall is rented which forms part of a large block of buildings known as the City Baths, Hartshorn Court. The population within a radius of a furlong from the building is computed at about 15,000; thirty per cent. of which are costermongers and itinerant street vendors; twenty per cent. are labourers and poor women who live by washing, charing, and needlework; thirty per cent. are either paupers or of doubtful occupation; and the remaining twenty per cent. are industriously wearing their lives away in the effort to earn a livelihood.

Our mission specially aims to benefit the neglected costermongers, a class not easily accessible. They are rarely at home. To obtain the day's vegetables, the coster must necessarily rise very early. He is at the market in time to unload the waggons for the market trade to good houses; and for this he will receive a shilling. He waits for the clearings of the market, which he obtains at prices varying from 3s. to 20s. for a truck load. He may dispose of them all by dinner-time at a good profit, but often he pushes his load, varying from one to two hundredweight, nearly all day before he obtains a dozen customers; in such cases he will take his stand in Whitecross Street, and sell the remainder of his stock to very poor people at the lowest possible profit. At night he is found in the beershop, theatre, or the penny gaff. His home is therefore neglected, and as that home consists entirely of one room, he has none of those sacred associations which cluster around our English firesides.

As on the week-day, so on the Sunday, they are away from home. On Sunday morning they drive a tremendous trade in Whitecross Street, which runs parallel with Golden Lane, where they take their stand, and customers come to buy from all parts of St. Luke's and Clerkenwell.

With very few exceptions the shops are open on Sunday, and as much money is often taken on a Sunday morning as in all the rest of the week put together. At the hour when church bells are calling to the house of prayer, the market is in full swing, and the street is redolent of stale fish, damaged fruit, and questionable vegetables, alternating with second-hand shoes, small

haberdasheries, dingy stationery, and all the other wares which are within the means of people who have to live on pence instead of shillings. Crowds of women with no bonnets on, their hair presenting the appearance of a tangled skein of thread, and their faces revealing the owner's decided objection to the intrusion of soap and water, are mingling with respectably-attired mechanics' wives, who, with the door-key hanging on one finger, and a huge basket on one arm, are anxiously scanning the contents of each seller's barrow, and counting the halfpence and small silver coins which they have concealed in the palms of their hands.

The coster is fond of dumb animals, and of birds especially. After his dinner he generally takes out the donkey for an airing, or he will tramp on foot, with his birdcage under his arm, to the Hackney marshes or Epping Forest, to catch, or to train his birds to sing.

They know and feel that to be Christians they must be different to what they are. "Can't be religious, sir, nohow," remarked one man, who had been entreated to give his heart to the Saviour, "can't let the 'barrer' (barrow) be lazy on Sundays." Sunday trading they nearly all admit to be *the* barrier against a religious life. And when one of them becomes convinced of sin, he immediately gives up Sunday work. "It's of no use," he will say in his simple way, "Jesus won't let me." "Don't work on Sundays now, sir," said an honest costermonger, as he looked up cheerfully: "a good day for trade, I know; but I likes to trade with heaven on Sunday, and larn a little about my soul then."

One of the most devoted of our voluntary helpers was a coster before his conversion, but with a noble self-sacrifice he disposed of his barrow, and now earns a precarious living as a bricklayer's labourer.

The ignorance of these poor people is lamentable. Invite them to a place of worship, and they will stare at you with stupid wonder. "Why, sir, you know it's nothing in my line; it don't do for the likes on us, yer know." One incorrigible man said to us on one occasion, "Well, sir, I ain't an eddicated person, but I knows wot's wot, and I knows that God never meant costermongers to be religious: why, don't yer see, it couldn't be done."

Services for preaching the gospel have been regularly conducted in the large Mission Hall. Attendance:—Sunday morning, 150; evening, 400; Wednesday, 200.

The inmates of the Tramps' Kitchens have been gathered in to hear the Word of Life; on some occasions they have been addressed by men of their own class. One, a thief, and an inmate of many gaols before conversion, says that the word Eternity first led him to think of religion. Another, whilst playing at pitch and toss one Sunday was brought to the feet of Jesus by an open-air preacher. "I allus felt ashamed of myself when I see'd the people coming out of church, and I'd been a cussin' and swearin' and drinking. I'm a changed man now, bless the Lord," said a navvy, and tears stood in his eyes as he spoke. "Now, mates, you want to get to heaven; I'll tell you how to get there: trust in Jesus Christ, he'll never forsake you. I, a poor sweep, am glad to wash my face when my day's work is done, but how much better to have Christ to wash your black soul? 'How do you know you are going to heaven?' sez my old mates. 'Well,' sez I, 'How do you know whether you've got sugar in your tea?' &c."

At the Mothers' Sewing Meetings, thirty poor women attend, who are entitled to receive the value of twopence in useful wearing apparel for each afternoon's work. None of these mothers go to any similar meeting. The Word of God is read, prayer is offered, followed by a short address or reading each afternoon.

The Ragged School for the children of these classes is attended by nearly 200. The teaching is quite unsectarian; therefore no creed or catechism is used. A portion of the Bible is daily read and explained, and the school is opened and closed with prayer and singing. Thorough discipline prevails, and several children of Roman Catholic parents attend the school. The admission is free; no children, however poor, are refused admission, except such as are suffering from contagious disease, or are dirty in their habits. Death made sad havoc among our scholars during the past year; some of them gave very satisfactory testimony of their faith in God. One little lad, C. D.—aged ten years, suffering from consumption,—came to the school as long as he could crawl there. During his illness the teachers and scholars often visited him, when he would always ask them to read, sing, and pray, in which he would try to join. One day, just before he died, the school was surprised to see him enter; (he had crept in unawares from his bed at home;) much exhausted, he sat down on a form, and his pale, sunken eye brightened up as he told his school-mates of the love of Jesus, and his hope of the better land. Every eye was filled with tears, and many little hearts were touched by his simple address. He died shortly after, and the ragged children brought their farthings to their teacher that a tablet might be raised to his memory in the school-room.

The Evening Classes are attended by 72. The teachers report that they "are much encouraged in their work by the evident anxiety of the pupils to improve themselves." The majority attending the Reading Class are stimulated by the desire to enjoy the privilege of being able to read the Bible for themselves.

The Sunday School is well attended, and good order prevails. The number of scholars on the books is 372, and the average attendance 165.

A Sunday Evening Service for juveniles is held at 22, Banner Square, when about fifty children attend, who would otherwise be playing in the courts and alleys. We could gather in at least 500 children if we had proper accommodation.

In addition there are a Band of Hope, a Penny Bank, a Library, and a Sick Visiting Society, &c.

A new school building is proposed, but cannot be commenced until more liberal help is promised. A very eligible site in the main thoroughfare, and occupying an area of 2,000 square feet, is now offered to us; the freehold at £1,200, or the lease for ninety-nine years at £60 per annum. The tenure of the present building is uncertain; and it is too small for the number in attendance. As the owners of the premises are endeavouring to sell their property, and as we only hire our portion of it on a quarterly tenancy, no time must be lost in securing the site referred to, and which is now in the market.

THE RIGHT HON. W. F. COWPER, M.P., ON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

At the recent annual meeting of the Southampton Ragged School, the Right Hon. W. F. Cowper, M.P., delivered the following speech on Ragged Schools. He said that—

The question to be solved by ragged schools was how the poorest and most abject children of the population—the waifs and strays of the tide of civilisation—might be brought under a sound and useful education; and he would ask what was the need of growth in our elaborate social organisation, if the basement of that social fabric rested upon foundations which were loose, variable, uncertain, and changeable? We wanted to know how the wealth of this country might be so distributed as to reach down from the upper and middle to the lower classes, and how matters could be so arranged that no children in any part of the community could be left in the state of abject neglect in which so many children were now placed. There was, then, a great problem to be solved, and that problem was not to be solved by any simple increase of wealth or commerce, because we found in the wealthiest and the greatest cities the largest accumulation of poverty and misery. Now, in London, which he supposed was the most wealthy city in the world, we found the largest number of persons just hovering over the brink of poverty, and left to wander as they might in ignorance and wretchedness. The large manufacturing towns of this country were the places where were found a wretched, haggard, wan population, with looks of anxiety, who proved a source of terror to all around them. The problem of how the lowest classes of the country were to be made happy, prosperous, and good, was still a question to be solved. It might be by some mode of co-operative action or some other ideas which were as yet floating in men's minds, but which had not yet taken any precise form. But at the present moment we had no better remedy for this evil than the old-fashioned, time-honoured method of exercising a little Christian sympathy and kindness. The Ragged School Institution was the most practical exemplification given at the present time to that great injunction, "Feed my lambs;" it was the one way that was offered to us of going out into the highways and bringing in those poor little children who were reared under most calamitous circumstances—children who were brought up in filth and in dirt, and whose pale and anxious faces—a sad sight to behold—indicated that abundant love required to be poured out upon them, and guidance and help afforded them in their infancy. And we saw these poor little children in the courts and alleys of our great towns sent out into the streets to shift for themselves and learn what they could, and they naturally learnt evil much more readily than good; they were constantly hearing blasphemous words and curses given expression to, and all sorts of evils were instilled into their minds. But while we viewed with pain the sorry sight exhibited by those poor neglected ones, who were left without parents, or with those who were too poor, too careless, or too ignorant to help them, when we turned from the dreary sight of those courts and alleys and entered the walls of the Ragged Schools, how different was the picture presented to us. We saw these children no longer with painful, anxious, and over-taxed countenances, but we found them intelligent, their faces beaming with the satisfaction of being cared for, and loved, and directed, with their minds awakened to the knowledge that was being poured into them, coupled with habits of discipline and industry—all tending to justify the care that was being bestowed upon them; the children

also learning their duty, the duty between right and wrong, and those habits of decency and propriety which perhaps they would never have acquired but for this tuition. So when we went into a Ragged School we felt that the work going on there was a blessed work in itself—a work materially promoting the good of the nation at large, by assisting in remedying that terrible evil—that cancer of vice and poverty—which was eating away so much of the vitality of each large city.

The report pointed to the feeding of the children, a plan to which he attached very great importance. He thought the idea of occasional feeding—feeding only at distant intervals—was first started by a scientific commission in France, who reported that they had known instances where a single good dinner given to children once in a fortnight, had had a very material effect in improving their physical condition. We who were well fed every day in the week, had some difficulty in understanding how a dinner given once a fortnight could materially benefit poor children, but so it was, and experience proved it. It was tried successfully in the island of Jersey by M. Victor Hugo, and some attention was drawn to the remarkable results proceeding from that fortnightly dinner. We ought to be able to collect enough funds to give a good dinner to these children at least once a week, and if that were done, he was sure we should not only see a marked result in the improvement of their health, but also in the care and attention they would also be able to give to their lessons, for when children came to their lessons without sufficient nourishment we could not be surprised that they did not get all the benefit which they would otherwise derive from what they were taught. But these occasional dinners were of immense advantage in numberless ways; for not only were they useful in strengthening the bodily frames of the children and in quickening their mental powers of application, but they created a link of sympathy and feeling between the children and those teachers who had the management of the school. A child would naturally understand the kindness that was displayed under a good dish of Irish stew rather more visibly and clearly than the kindness in teaching them lessons of arithmetic and reading. Perhaps the amount of kindness exhibited might not be more in one case than the other, but it was obvious that the tangible dish of food was appreciated much more keenly and visibly than the administering of a lesson to the child. And the parents also were able to feel that the care shown to their children was a very real one—one that extended not merely to the teaching of the mind, but to the nourishment of their bodies.

It was not necessary for him to dilate further upon it; but it must be clear to all, whether here or elsewhere, that the Ragged School Institution was one that must commend itself both to the reason and the feelings of all who considered it. It was the most reasonable way in which we could help the most destitute and abject portion of the population. There might be harm done in giving alms to grown-up people. We found that any attempt to relieve those who became recipients from the suffering which had probably come upon them either by some moral or some mental mistake—some errors of conduct or some want of knowledge—might produce evil instead of good; but he asked whether any harm could possibly accrue from supplying gratuitous education to the class of children who came into these realms. If the managers of the schools were careful to observe the rules, and to admit only that class of children who would not be otherwise in the paying schools—the National or the British Schools; if they carefully restricted the benefits of the school to that class of children for which it was designed, and if they gave a really useful practical education, providing them with those elementary sources of instruction which awaken the intelligence and cultivate the judgment; then he was quite sure that all its proceedings were good,

and nothing about it could prove injurious, and that all persons might, with clear consciences, do what they could to support and increase the action of this school.

And then as regarded our feelings he was sure there was no one who had a good heart at all but must be glad of the opportunity of assisting in some way or other in so good a work as that of giving education to these poor ragged children, taking the word ragged not, of course, simply in reference to their clothes, but to designate that class of children who were unable to go into paying schools, and who required the kind assistance and attention of others than their parents. We must then feel that it was a good and blessed work to be in any way instrumental in providing the means whereby these children should learn their duty, and should be so educated that they should not continue to extend and transmit the evil habits and ways which they might have learnt in their childhood, and that they might be diverted from a course which would probably lead them into crime. For it was just this class of children who were found when neglected to enter upon a course which led them into prisons or punishments of other kinds, and made them a prey upon the industry of other people. It was a source of the greatest comfort to have such an institution as the Ragged School exercising its kind and benevolent objects, and which enabled us, by any contributions we could make towards the school, to take our share in relieving these poor children from the sorrows, sufferings, and trials which were so unfortunately their sad lot.

INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION, ALBERT STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

Some months previously it had been announced that at the close of the year a second exhibition would be held in connection with the Albert Street Ragged School, Spitalfields. Accordingly many of the scholars were busily engaged in preparing their various articles for competition, so as to send them in by Monday, December 28th, after which none would be received. The number of specimens sent was greatly in excess of the previous year. They consisted of models, maps, plain, ornamental, and illuminated writing, plain and fancy needlework, and numerous other fancy articles.

The Committee appointed to examine the various articles judiciously awarded prizes to the juvenile exhibitors to the value of eight pounds. These were distributed at the annual meeting on Thursday evening, December 31st, by the superintendents of the various sections of the institution—viz., the Girls' Refuge, the Day School, and the Sunday Evening Ragged School. About two hundred and fifty children sat down to a substantial tea, after which addresses were given by friends. The prizes consisting of books, varying in value from one shilling to ten shillings and sixpence, accompanied with a very handsome illuminated certificate of merit, were given to the successful competitors. The first prize, value 10s. 6d., was obtained by J. W., of the Sunday School, for a model of a printing press. Some very handsome specimens of illuminated writing were exhibited by the youths of the Sunday School advanced class, and the maps shown by the pupil teachers of the Day School were very highly commended. The girls of the Refuge elicited

warm approval for their articles of plain needlework, of which there was a scarcity from the other branches of the school. The first prize in the Sunday Evening School was awarded to C. W. for a very nicely finished model of a table.

A most interesting feature in the proceedings was a presentation from the Sunday School senior class to their teacher, Mr. J. Barnard. This class numbers twenty-two. The members selected as their present a beautiful copy of "The Land and the Book."

The success which has attended these two trial efforts to promote healthy and useful employment for the leisure hours of the scholars has determined the promoters, with the kind assistance of friends, to continue these exhibitions annually.

POOR TOM; OR, NOBODY ASKED ME.

I HAD been gone some weeks on a journey. Glancing over a newspaper issued in my absence, I met a paragraph which troubled me. It concerned a boy, one Tom Johnson, put in gaol for robbing a gentleman's garden and barn. "Tom Johnson! Is that *our* Tom? Of course not." Yet I recollected not having seen him since my return. There was nobody near to inform me. "Tom," I kept saying: "it can't be *our* Tom. No, no."

The next morning the first thing was to ask for Tom. "Tom, our poor errand-boy? Haven't you heard? The poor fellow is in gaol, and likely to go to prison. His trial comes on in the September term."

I determined to see him, and took the earliest opportunity of visiting him in his new quarters, and I am sorry to say it was the *first* visit I ever paid him. Pressing through the narrow, damp gangway that led to his cell on the back side of the building, I felt sad enough.

"A set of young rascals," said the turnkey; "pity the whole gang weren't here; and Tom Johnson's the ringleader of 'em."

"Yet I never saw any vicious leanings in the boy," I said.

"Perhaps you don't know as well as you think for," said the turnkey.

Perhaps I didn't, and so I didn't stop to argue the point.

When we reached the cell, whose door grated on its hinges as the man unlocked, opened it, and let me in, Tom was lying on his low cot, his head wrapped in the quilt. He started up, and rubbing his eyes, looked pleased when he saw who had come; then, as if suddenly recollecting where he was, his head dropped on his bosom, and he began to twirl the bedclothes with his fingers.

"Why, Tom, my boy, how are you?" I asked, cheerfully.

"So so," he answered, without looking up.

"I did not expect to find you here, Tom. How did it happen? How came you here?"

"Oh, 'cause," answered Tom, "they put me in."

"Didn't you know 'twas wicked to steal, Tom?" said I, sitting down by his side.

"Yes, sir; but didn't think much about that part of it."

"Didn't you learn the ten commandments in Sabbath School, Tom?" I asked.

"Never went to Sabbath School."

"Never went to Sabbath School? Why not, Tom?"

"*Nobody ever asked me to go.*"

"Nobody ever asked you? Well, you ought to have gone, of course."

"Didn't 'zactly know how," answered Tom. "When the Dow boys got their handsome paper, all pictured, I wished I could go, but nobody asked me."

"Don't you go to meeting, Tom?"

"No, sir."

"Why, Tom, you ought to have gone to meeting, then you would never come to this vile place."

"My clothes weren't fit. The meetings you go to wouldn't have such folks as I be. Good many times I saw you go in, but was 'fraid to follow; they'd turned me out."

"You've a mother, Tom, haven't you?"

"No, sir; she's been dead ever since I gave up selling candy; had nobody to make it after she died."

"Any father?"

"No, sir; he's been dead always. I live with my cousin's folks; but they fight me."

"Poor boy, why did you never tell me all this before?"

"You never asked me," said Tom, piteously.

When I first knew Tom, he used to come to the store with a clean box well stocked with molasses candy, and his clean and tidy appearance was a decided recommendation to his wares. There was a frank, prompt, respectful air about the boy which took my fancy, and he became our errand boy. He did well for us, and we paid him well for his small services. But did money pay *all* I owed him? Ah, I began to be afraid not.

"I don't want to stay here," at length Tom said, bursting into tears; "it makes me sick. I feel awfully."

"You see what comes of associating with such a set of fellows, Tom. They led you into evil courses."

"Well, they liked me," said Tom, sobbing, "and I didn't know much of anybody else since I went to my cousins'."

"But you knew it was wicked, Tom."

"Yes, sir; but it was meant more in sport than wickedness. We bet who was sharpest."

"Tell me how it happened." Tom told his story, a perfectly straightforward one, I have no doubt. There was a pause.

"Can't you get me clear, sir?" asked Tom.

"I'll do what I can for you, my poor fellow."

He squeezed my hand as I rose to go, and sobbed violently as I left him.

"The young rogue," said the turnkey, meeting me in the hall; "did you make much headway with him?"

"I don't know," I said, and quickly left.

How much I thought of poor Tom all the day through. Two or three spoke to me about him, and the *way* they spoke pained me exceedingly:

"The little scamp," "The young rascal," and the free use of language whose harshness fairly startled me; and yet they were accounted kind-hearted men. But they were ignorant, as I had been, of the state of society from which just such a class of boys naturally springs—an ignorance, however, which my conscience would not allow me to excuse.

The next day I went to see Tom again. I took an orange and a picture-book to him.

"The boy is sick," said the turnkey, "and I really believe he is."

"Well, Tom," I asked, sitting down by his side, "how are you?"

"So so," he answered, with a faint smile.

I put the orange in his hand, and laid the little book on the coverlid. Oh, how I wished to talk to Tom about his soul; but it was awkward to begin *now* a friendly care for him, neglected all too long; for aught I knew, neglected till too late. And it was a bitter thought to me. While Tom was sucking his orange, I slipped out and borrowed a Bible of the jail-keeper.

"Don't you want me to read to you, Tom?"

"What's it about?" he asked.

"You listen and see."

I turned to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and read the account.

"Big thunderstorm, wasn't it?" said Tom, after I got through.

I talked to him about the commandments, but he listened with very little interest. "Tom, you've heard about Jesus Christ, and Judas who betrayed his Master? He was a thief, and you know what end he came to?"

"What?" he asked.

"He killed himself."

"Killed hisself? Perhaps he hadn't anybody to care for him."

"Yes, he had; Jesus cared for him."

Finding myself making small headway with the poor lad, I comforted myself with the hope of doing better next time. Tom grew sicker. The gaol-keeper moved him to his own house, and I ordered everything to be done for his comfort. But it was his poor soul which weighed most heavily upon me. One day when we read to him the story of the cross, of Jesus Christ loving him and dying for *his* sins, tears ran down his cheeks. Tom's ear was gained, his heart was touched, and he listened to the prayer put up for him with serious and heartfelt attention. All exhortation and warning and instruction *short of this*, had failed of producing any strong impression upon the poor boy's conscience; this, the simple story of a dying Saviour, moved and melted him as I had never seen him before. Then I felt hopes for Tom. "He will be a good man yet," I said to myself.

The next day his mind was wandering. I hastened to the sad end. A few more days and he was no more, and I followed him to the grave his chief mourner.

There is a large class of such boys as Tom to be *kindly* cared for. There are multitudes of boys and girls outside the church, outside the Ragged School, outside all religious and moral instruction, who may well say, "Nobody cares for my soul." Many a promising child is growing up in ignorance to be a blot upon society, a worse than useless citizen, a *lost one*, notwithstanding the death of Christ and his healing, who to all human view *might* be saved. We must *seek them out*. This is our proper Christian work. *We are responsible*. "To whom much is given, of him will much be required."

WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR CHRIST?

CHRISTIAN, what are you doing? Precious souls are dying around you; some are "wishing" they were Christians, and wondering inly what they shall do to be saved—what are you doing for them?

Jesus is near you, very near, by solemn providences and in the gentle whispers of the Spirit of his love. He has suffered and died for you. He has redeemed your soul, he keeps you now from falling—what are you doing for him?

Do you plead your cares, your inability to labour, your unworthiness, your little influence? God knows all, and yet he says, "Go work to-day in my vineyard." If you can do no more you can at least pick up the pebbles in the way, the stumbling-stones which you yourself have dropped, lest little feet may *trip*, or some tottering ones, just entering the narrow way, may fall.

On such a day, in conversation with a friend, you spoke unkindly, uncharitably, unchristianly, of one of Christ's little ones. Other ears than those for whom the remark was intended, heard, and another heart treasured it and wondered if *Christians* felt and spoke thus! You dropped a stone there, a stone of stumbling. Go pick it up; correct the impression you unconsciously made. Let not your Saviour thus be wounded. Let not others think lightly of your blessed Master from your hasty words.

You can speak a word for Jesus to some one who knows him not. Tell him how precious a friend He is, for oh, if you do not, are you sure that any one will? Tremble lest, through some neglect of yours, some sinner that might have graced the Redeemer's triumph, a trophy of his love, shall be among his enemies for ever.

A young friend said to me the other day, "I called at your house, hoping you would say something to me on the subject of religion, but you did not!" Oh, how the words sank and burned into my very soul. "You did not!" "Did not!" That friend is now rejoicing in Christ; but oh, if through my neglect that soul had been lost, how could I have gone up to my Father's house, and met that charge at the great tribunal! "You did not" speak to me—"you did not" pray with me—"you did not" show that you cared for my soul, and so I did not try to be a Christian. Are not such cases all about us, waiting for a word to draw out the real desires of the heart for God and to set it in the right direction?

Oh, Christian reader, do something for Christ. No other being can accomplish the work which God has given you to do. There is probably some soul, which, unless you do your duty, will never "see Jesus" in peace. Can you meet that soul at the judgment, and confront its reproachful gaze as, with trembling, it shall turn for ever from all light and blessedness at the fearful word, "Depart"?

Oh, do then something for Christ; do something for souls about you. Do it *now*.

H. M. L.

REST FOR WEARY WORKERS.

No. II.

THE appeal made by "A. L. O. E." in last month's magazine for "Rest for Weary Workers" has been kindly responded to, as may be seen by reference to the second page of our wrapper this month. During the last month Mr. Gent went to Sutton to make preliminary arrangements for the "weary workers" at Elm Cottage—the home of Mrs. Hawkins. He found that person intelligent, hospitable, and amiable; and the impression made on his mind from that visit was that no one could spend a week in such a Christian's home, situated in so healthy and pleasant a locality, without great benefit to both mind and body. The home is a humble one, as may be imagined, and no one should go to it with false expectations or vain conclusions. It must be borne in mind that it is a rest for the *weary*—the weary *in* the work, not *of it*; and to the really weary, *rest* is always sweet, acceptable, and beneficial, let the accompanying circumstances be what they may. But all the weary ones in this work would not require a rest of this character, being in circumstances to secure it for themselves whenever and wherever they pleased.

There are, however, some who, if a rest of this kind were not provided as now suggested, would have to go on in their work—and still on—without it. Some of these "A. L. O. E." proposes through Mr. Gent to invite to spend a week at Elm Cottage, Sutton, without cost to them for board or lodging. This cottage will not be available during the month of May, and perhaps a week or two more; with that exception it will be ready from the 20th of March to the 16th of October. These twenty-four weeks of the best parts of the year are secured for Ragged School teachers. Mr. Gent will be prepared to receive *hints* from any friends who may be acquainted with such "weary workers" as above referred to, with a view to an invitation being given to them. It is, however, hoped no offence will be taken if nothing comes of the *hint*, for it must be borne in mind there are 400 paid teachers, and 3,000 voluntary teachers, and of the twenty-four to be invited it may be said, as of the few fishes of old, "what are these among so many?" An extension, however, has by Mrs. Hawkins been volunteered to receive two teachers at a time, if they be willing to share the limited accommodation. It is probable that this offer to extend the benefit to a greater number may largely add to the pleasantness of the rest itself. For the guidance of those who may have to find Elm Cottage, we would thus direct them:—on ascending from the station into the road, turn to the right, go through Sutton; keep on the high road till a church on the right hand is reached. The highway here divides into three roads; take the one most to the left, a short distance along which on the left is the Sutton Common Road, near the far end of which on the right hand side is Elm Cottage.

Poet's Corner.

SERVING JESUS.

'Tis sweet to work for Jesus, in this life's little day,
To spread around "the joyful sound," as those forgiven may;
To tell his loving kindness, his promises so true:
To urge the young that they may come, and trust this Saviour too.

'Tis sweet to work for Jesus, for him who loved, and gave
Himself for us, an offering, thus our ruined souls to save.
Glad service we *would* render for grace so rich and free;
Yet, Lord, we mourn that we have borne so little fruit to thee.

'Tis sweet to work for Jesus: Be this our one desire,
Our purpose still, to do his will, whatever he require.
No action is too lowly, no work of love too small;
If Christ but lead, we may, indeed, well follow such a call.

'Tis sweet to work for Jesus, while our weak spirits rest
In his own care safe sheltered there, and with his presence blest.
In such calm, happy moments, no greater joy we know;
Redeemed from sin, we live for him, to whom our all we owe.

'Tis sweet to work for Jesus—Oh! weary not of this,
But onward press with cheerfulness, though rough the pathway is.
Hold on, unmoved and patient, till he shall call thee home,
With joy to stand at God's right hand, to serve before the throne.

L.

Teachers' Column.

VOLUNTARY AGENCY IN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

A MEETING of the secretaries and superintendents of Ragged Schools, convened by the Committee of the Ragged School Union, was held on February 3rd, in the Field Lane School-room. After tea Mr. Thomas Brooker presided.

Mr. Gent, in stating the object of the meeting, said that the two school agents had suggested in their annual reports the desirability of convening the officials and the paid teachers of Ragged Schools for the discussion of some subject calculated to improve their schools. The paid teachers' meeting was held last November, and this evening the secretaries and superintendents had been invited for the same purpose. He then gave some interesting statistics, showing how, for every period of five years, during the past quarter of a century, there had been a marked increase in the number of teachers and scholars. The subject chosen for friendly conversation was "Voluntary agency in Sunday and week-evening Ragged Schools."

Mr. Brooker then read a paper on "Helps."

This paper was devoted to lay agency in general, and was of a very suggestive character. As the paper would occupy too much space, we intended to give some

extracts, but, finding that an abridgment would only spoil it, we have refrained from printing any portion.

The following friends then briefly addressed the meeting:—

Mr. Comber (New Inn Yard) suggested that a committee be formed at once, with the view of visiting every congregation. The great object would be to let the more spiritual members know the painful fact that there are 30,000 destitute children outside the London Ragged Schools, who could be at once admitted were there sufficient teachers.

Mr. Kemp (Milton's Yard) thought it desirable that the teachers of Ragged Schools should meet frequently to discuss their wants and their plans. The Ragged School Union might organise monthly or quarterly meetings for that purpose.

Mr. Peppercorn (Giffin Street) had addressed circulars to the ministers of Greenwich and Deptford, asking for help. But, with one exception, no one responded. That pastor invited the services of teachers from the pulpit, when some at once offered their services.

Rev. Mr. Atherton said it must not be forgotten that most pastors had a difficulty to get teachers even for their own schools. He thought that local influence was more effective than that of any central society. Teachers ought to come from the rich west to help the poor east; and were the constraining love of Christ more felt, this would be done.

Mr. Jopling (Albert Street) advised superintendents to visit large establishments, and ask those behind the counter for personal help. He had done this, and by this plan had obtained many teachers, especially for the week-night school.

Mr. Aldridge (Hoxton) thought that help ought to be more looked for *inside* the school. By Bible classes elder scholars might be qualified to become teachers. There are ten such teachers in his Ragged School. He also thought that they ought to look more to the working and less to the middle class for voluntary agency. Working men living in the district know more than do the middle classes of the special needs of the poor.

Mr. Stocker (Little Wild Street) said that when more teachers are needed they should be prayed for. God would be sure to send them. Whether middle or working class he cared not, as both classes were wanted. When they come they should feel, by the brotherly shake of the hand, that they are among true friends.

Mr. Watkins (Hog Lane) suggested that they should invite personal friends to visit the school, or to attend the teachers' prayer-meeting. Some had been led to give their services in his school by this means.

Mr. Montagu (Albert Street) said that old scholars should be invited to meet the teachers once a quarter. Scholars should be invited to the teachers' prayer-meeting. As soon as possible they should have some office suited to their age. By these means nineteen teachers, including the superintendent, who were once scholars, are enrolled in his school.

This interesting meeting was then concluded with the doxology and benediction.

Children's Gallery.

HOW JOHN ASHWORTH BOUGHT HIS FIRST BOOK.

Mr. Ashworth, who is minister of the "Chapel of the Destitute" at Rochdale, was once a very poor boy. God has prospered him, but he has not forgotten his poverty, and so he delights to point the outcast and the destitute to Jesus.

He once told how he managed to buy his first book. By the plan adopted he again proved the truth of the old saying

that "where there's a will there's a way." He said, "I am not an old man, but the youth of the present day have many privileges which I had not when I was a lad. I remember how I got my first book. I shall never forget it—I do not want to forget it. I was in the habit of going to a place in Rochdale called Providence Chapel. From childhood I have never been an absentee from the means of grace, and I need not speak of the great boon that it has been to me. There was a little pew in that chapel, so small that it would not hold more than one. Whether they collected any rent for the pew I do not know. I never paid anything for it. I had nothing to pay with. Well, I used to get into this triangular-shaped pew. One Sunday the minister, Mr. Ely, made use in his sermon of the word 'prerogative.' Why that word should have so impressed itself upon me I do not know, but it did. It bothered me the day after, and I sought the assistance of an old man in our neighbourhood named Adam. I said to him, 'What is the meaning of the word prerogative?'

"He said, 'I do not know, and there is nobody in this country knows.' He said, 'Where didst thou hear that?' It was a poser for him. I told him where I had heard it, and he said, 'Thou may go and ask Ely then?'

"'Now,' said I, 'is there a book that tells the meaning of words?'

"'There is,' he said—'there is what they call a Johnson's Dictionary; but there isn't one in this neighbourhood.' He said 'possibly the number man,' the travelling bookseller who comes every month—my father took in 'Buchan's Domestic Medicine' in parts—'may have one. Ask him when he comes.' The 'number man' came in due time; and after he had put down the part of Buchan on the table and had gone out, I followed him. I followed him about two hundred yards before I durst speak to him, and then I called to him from behind, 'I say.'

"He turned round with, 'What do you say?' and nearly drove all my say out of me.

"I said, 'Have you a book that tells the meaning of words?'

"He said, 'Do you mean Johnson's Dictionary?' and I replied 'Yes.'

"He said, 'Yes, I have it. How much will you give me a month if I bring you one? The price is 2s. 6d.: how much can you give me a month?'

"That was a very serious question, and after hesitating, I replied, stretching to the very utmost I durst, 'Twopence.' Well, his good nature prevailed; he burst out laughing and said, 'You shall have it.

"I am thankful to this day that the man's good nature did prevail. You know twopence is twopence if you haven't got it. Some of you may laugh at being fast for twopence. Well twopence is twopence, and it was so with me. I knew my mother's circumstances. I knew that she had not a farthing to spare, and that she had never what she ought to have. I was determined I would not ask my mother for it; I would get it somewhere without asking her for it. I saw a load of coals thrown down belonging to an old bachelor called 'Old James,' and I thought I would get these coals in. I did so, and then opening his door I said, 'I have got your coals in.' 'Very well,' he said. I thought, was that all? I swept up the coals, and went again and said, 'James, I have got your coals in.' 'Very well.' I was astonished; I had expected a penny. I went and swept again, and then ventured down the third time. Just as I opened the door out sprang 'James' with an 'Off; I will coals thee if thou comes here again.' I ran up and ran away. I was mortified to an extent I cannot tell. I felt as if I could have scattered his coals all over Lancashire if I could. There was a woman in our neighbourhood called Lucy, and sometimes she had to pick up a lad to take her husband his dinner. I went to her and said, 'I will take Jack's dinner three times for a halfpenny.' 'Very well.' Three times there and three times back, six miles for a halfpenny. Four times six is twenty-four miles for my first twopence to pay the first instalment for my

first book. Now I want to know if there is a lad in Barnsley who labours under greater difficulties than I did. I made a bargain with myself I would never pass a word I did not understand without consulting this book, and it was in that way I soon acquired a knowledge of the meaning of words."

Editor's Note-book.

WILLING TO COMMUNICATE.

The joy resulting from the diffusion of blessings to all around us is the purest and sublimest that can enter the human mind; and can be conceived only by those who have experienced it. Next to the consolations of Divine grace, it is the most sovereign balm to the miseries of life, both in him who is the object of it, and in him who exercises it; and it will not only soothe and tranquillise a troubled spirit, but inspire a constant flow of good humour, content, and gaiety of heart.—*Bishop Porteus.*

EVERY CHRISTIAN A MISSIONARY.

Every man, said that great home evangelist, Dr. Chalmers, is a missionary now and for ever, for good or for evil, whether he intends or designs it or not. He may be a blot, radiating his dark influence outward to the very circumference of society; or he may be a blessing, spreading benediction over the length and breadth of the world, but a blank he cannot be.

There are no moral blanks; there are no neutral characters. We are either the sower that sows and corrupts, or the light that silently operates; but being dead or alive every man speaks.

ALL HANDS AT WORK.

At Pirrie, a station of the Free Church of Scotland, in South Africa, in enlarging the Church, the missionary, Rev. Mr. Ross, built the walls; his son did the wood-work during his vacation; native assistants did the plastering, and built the seats; Mrs. Ross laid the floor, which was of clay, whitewashed the outside, and coloured the interior with yellow ochre, which the school-girls brought.

When *all hands* in the Christian Church, with equal alacrity, set to work in the spiritual building, how rapidly will the walls go up!

LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

Unto Him, and not to what we do for Him. Too much taken up with our work, we may forget our Master; it is possible to have the hands full, and the heart empty. Taken up with our Master we cannot forget our work; if the heart is filled with His love, how can the hands not be active in His service?

Unto Jesus, and not to the apparent success of our efforts. Apparent success is not the measure of real success; and besides, God has not commanded us to succeed, but to work. It is of our work that He will require an account, and not of our success; why then take thought about it before the time? It is for us to sow the seed; it is for God to gather the fruit; if not to-day it will be to-morrow; if not by us it will be by others.

Even when success is granted us, it is always dangerous to let our eyes rest upon it complacently; on the one hand we are tempted to attribute something of it to ourselves; on the other hand we thus accustom ourselves to give way to relaxing our zeal when we cease to perceive its effects, that is to say, at the very time when we ought to redouble our energy. To look to success is to walk by sight; to look to Jesus, and to persevere in following and serving Him in spite of all discouragements is to walk by faith. Thy *work* shall be rewarded, saith Jehovah.—*From the French of Adolph Monod.*

Correspondence.

PENNY READINGS, &c.—THEIR LEGALITY.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION, 1, EXETER HALL, W.C.

DEAR SIR,—The attention of the Committee of the Ragged School Union has been called to the use of Ragged School rooms for Penny Readings, payment being required for admission by those who attend them. Some persons have doubts that such a use of the rooms makes them liable to be condemned as disorderly places under the Statutes of 25th Geo. II., cap. 36. These friends have had their doubts somewhat strengthened by the opinion they sought on the subject by a legal gentleman. Such being the case, the Committee referred the question to E. Jennings, Esq., the hon. solicitor to the Society, and he has kindly given the subject his serious consideration, and from whom the following letter has been received.

I am, Dear Sir, yours very truly,

J. G. GENT, Secretary.

LINCOLN'S INN CHAMBERS, 40, CHANCERY LANE, W.C.

DEAR SIR,—Attention should be given to the preamble of the Statute 25th Geo. II., cap. 36, it is as follows:—

"The multitude of places of entertainment for the lower sort of people is another great cause of thefts and robberies, as they are thereby tempted to spend their small substance in riotous pleasures, and in consequence are put on unlawful methods of supplying their wants and renewing their pleasures; in order, therefore, to prevent the said temptation to thefts and robberies, and to correct, as far as may be, the habit of idleness which is become too general over the whole kingdom, and is productive of much mischief and inconvenience." Then follows the enactment as to the necessity of a license. Clearly, the object of the legislature was to prevent, as far as possible, improper entertainments being given in any place.

Now, with respect to Penny Readings properly conducted, it could not, for one moment, be contended that the place where such entertainment was given "was a great cause of thefts and robberies," or in any way tempted to spend their small substance in "riotous pleasures." On the contrary, I should contend that the Penny Readings tended to improve the habits of the class for which they are intended.

Another point arises, and it is this, "Whether the musical part of the entertainment was a principal or essential part of the evening's reading." If it was a musical entertainment altogether, a grave question would arise supposing it should be held that Penny Readings come within the preamble of 25th Geo. II., cap. 36) whether the penalty could not be enforced; for the words of the Statute are in the disjunctive, and a license would be required for music only, or for dancing only, if held to be within the statute; but where the music did not form the principal or essential part of the evening's entertainment, but only subsidiary, then I think a license would not be required. See the cases Greig *v.* Bendeno, 27, Law Journal Reports, M.C.,

294; Ellis Bg. Ellis, p. 133; Hall *v.* Green, 23, Law Journal Reports, M.C., p. 15; Guagherir *v.* Matthews, 34, Law Journal Reports, M.C., p. 116.

The above cases show that in order to bring an entertainment within the Act, the music and dancing must not be merely subsidiary, but must form a substantial part of the entertainment. So I apprehend, as licenses are required for music only, if the Penny Readings come within the meaning of the Statute, and it was altogether a musical entertainment, or that music formed the substantial part, then a license would be necessary. For the reasons herein given, my opinion is that Penny Readings would not come within the meaning of the Statute; but, perhaps, upon a question of such importance it would be well to consider whether the opinion of some gentlemen at the Bar, more conversant with these matters, and who either opposes or supports applications for licenses to be granted by the magistrates, should not be taken.

Yours faithfully,

EDWARD JENNINGS.

Mr. J. G. Gent, Ragged School Union.

Notices of Meetings.

COPENHAGEN STREET.

THE twelfth annual meeting of the Islington Reformatory and Ragged School, Copenhagen Street, was recently held at Myddelton Hall. There was a very good attendance. The Rev. Daniel Wilson occupied the chair.

Mr. E. Stock read the annual report, which stated that it is nearly six years since the new buildings in Copenhagen Street were opened. The annual income, upon which the institution is supported, is a distinct matter. It has been sustained year by year with considerable difficulty; but although the committee have never been able to lay by anything against contingencies, they have, until the last eighteen months, succeeded in keeping out of debt. Last year the general fund, for the first time, showed a considerable deficiency, owing partly to the indirect effects of the commercial crisis, and partly to the increased price of provisions. The result has inevitably been that last year's deficiency is increased this year to over £100. The committee thus describe the work of the institution:—The Islington Reformatory receives within its walls fifty destitute, friendless, or viciously-disposed (but not convicted) boys. It is not a "Reformatory" in the legal sense, *i.e.*, an institution certified by Government for the reception of lads convicted of petty offences. Nor is it, strictly speaking, a "Refuge," which the homeless can enter and leave at their will. It is, in technical language, an "Industrial School"—in more familiar parlance, a "Home"—for boys who, though not actually criminals, are, from character or associations, in danger of becoming so. Some are put in by their parents, or other friends, because they cannot keep their hands from "picking and stealing," or from still more outrageous conduct at their own homes. Others, who are friendless, are sent by charitable persons to save them from almost certain degradation and crime. These boys are housed, fed, clothed, simply educated, taught the rudiments of a trade, and, if not removed by their friends, put into situations. The testimony of visitors is unanimous in commendation of the arrangements and management. Workshops, playgrounds, dormitories, infirmary, kitchen, all meet with approval. The health of the boys is entirely satisfactory. Serious illness has been almost unknown in the institution for many years, and even lesser complaints are rare. In the past year 27

boys have left the Home; viz., 14 started in life, 12 returned to their parents, and one absconded; 381 have been in the institution during the last twelve years. The committee, respecting the other branch of their operations—the Ragged School—say:—This school, one of the largest free schools in London, and the only one of any size in the great western districts of the parish of Islington, with their population of 50,000, is held in a spacious building on the premises of the reformatory, and, though supported out of the same funds, is really a distinct and very important work. 400 children are on the books, and above 300 in daily attendance. The instruction is of a simple character, including the "three R's," the elements of geography, and (for the girls) plain needlework.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. G. Calthrop, J. C. Geikie, W. Guest, J. Rooker, and Messrs. Fox and Paton.

ROBERT STREET.

On Wednesday evening, the 27th ult., the twenty-second annual meeting was held under the presidency of the Lord Mayor, when addresses were delivered by the Revs. V. J. Charlesworth, R. Berry, J. D. Williams, and others.

The report stated that the day-schools contain about 400 children, and the evening about 50. In the Sunday-school there has been an average of 167 scholars, four of whom, from the senior class, have been admitted to the Church during the year. On Sunday evenings from 200 to 300 children are under instruction. The Band of Hope numbers nearly 200 members, and is in vigorous operation. A mothers' meeting is held weekly, to which about 170 mothers are attached, most of whom subscribe their pence to the boot and clothing clubs. The penny bank numbered 3,643 depositors during the year, who paid in no less a sum than £1,715 1s. 1d. A benevolent society supplies mothers with a box of clothing in their necessity, and also presents them with articles of food and a set of clothes for the infant. Ninety-nine poor women have been thus assisted during the year. The report expressed the thanks of the teachers to Edward Grove, Esq., for his annual donation of £40, and for the Christmas dinner he provides for the poor children.

EXETER.

On Monday, January 26, the inhabitants of Exeter held a meeting, under the presidency of the mayor, Mr. H. S. Ellis, to devise measures for improving the condition of the poor and neglected children of the city and neighbourhood.

It was thought by the speakers that the overcrowding of dwellings was one of the chief evils to be grappled with, and an urgent appeal on this point is to be made to the local board of health. Sir Stafford Northcote, M.P., introduced the subject of intemperance as another evil to be dealt with, and proposed—"That this meeting, feeling that intemperance is the cause of much of the evil that they are anxious to remedy, expresses a hope that the whole question of the sale of intoxicating liquors may be thoroughly investigated by the legislature, and in the present state of the law respectfully memorialises the magistrates of the city to inflict severe penalties on all disorderly houses when in their power to do so, and to exercise with greater strictness the discretion vested in them as to the licensing of houses for the sale of such liquors." The right hon. baronet gave his testimony that the prevalence of intemperance was one of the most fruitful causes of crime and poverty. He begged the new association not to let parents slip out of the responsibility of supporting their children. He had known many parents who, thus relieved, spent their money in drink. Supervision over the public-houses ought to be exercised with unflinching and persevering zeal. He expressed a strong conviction, however, that any attempt to compulsorily repress the sale of intoxicating liquors would be found impracticable in the present state of public feeling.

Papers, Original and Selected.

TAXATION OF VOLUNTARY LABOUR.—POOR-RATES ON RAGGED SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

THERE is a manifest tendency in these days to regard the wisdom of our ancestors with contempt. In many respects, doubtless, this scorn is warranted; for, misled either by priestcraft or statecraft, many of their opinions were mere prejudices, and some of their laws were alien to both Scripture and common sense. Yet, as no age has a monopoly of wisdom, they had glimpses of light to which their descendants would do well to take heed. In no respect was their foresight more seen than in the provision they made for the secular training of those who were too poor or too ignorant to provide education for themselves. Believing the Bible's axiom, that "a wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength" (Prov. xxiv. 5), amongst the many social improvements devised by the fathers of the Reformation were schools for the poorer classes. Thus, the illustrious John Knox in Scotland, and Edward VI. in England, founded schools, some of which are effectively worked in these days. Modifications they doubtless need to suit modern ideas and present needs, yet they still exist to prove that the cry for popular education, which is now so rife, is, after all, but an echo of the wisdom of our ancestors.

There is one thing we are quite sure *their* sense of justice would have kept them from originating, namely, the taxation of voluntary schools; in other words, of those voluntary teachers from whom the funds are mainly derived. This, indeed, has been reserved to be enrolled among the many wonderful discoveries of the nineteenth century. For 300 years *all* schools had been exempt from Government or parochial taxes; but, as a deduction from a judgment given by the House of Lords, in the case of "Jouse and Others *v.* The Mersey Dock and Harbour Company," all schools—not held in or under a church or chapel—are now held to be liable to pay poor-rates. Against an assessment made by the parish of Hackney, the British Orphan Asylum appealed to the Court of Queen's Bench; but, unhappily, they failed in their

appeal. The judgment was given by one of the ablest judges, Mr. Justice Blackburn, who said that "the judges are unanimously of opinion that all buildings of a charitable or eleemosynary character *must* be rated in future to the relief of the poor."

As might be expected, many parish officials were not slow to avail themselves of this judgment to inflict a new *tax on voluntary labour;* thus many Sunday Schools and Ragged Schools now pay heavy poor-rates. We have not at present the means of stating the aggregate sum thus paid by the Ragged Schools of England, but we have before us a list of sixteen London Ragged Schools who paid last year £104 for poor-rates. Taking this as a fair average of the amount claimed by the parishes, it would show that 186 London Ragged Schools paid last year £1,176. But this estimate leaves out the monstrous case of Field Lane Ragged School, which last year paid no less than £156 2s. 5d. (!!) for poor-rates, and that, not because the directors make any profit from their arduous work, but because it is thought fitting by the parish authorities thus to *fine* them for striving to save the waifs and strays of society —as well adult as juvenile.

Need we say that we altogether protest against such taxation of voluntary labour? But the aspect of this question becomes worse when we remember how the parish taxes are squandered by the local authorities. The statistics of the Poor-law Board indicate that London pauperism cost last year £1,175,363; but this estimate does not let out the secret how much of this vast sum was spent on officials. Take, for example, the following instances of extravagance, which were recently given at a public meeting of ratepayers, and which no one has had the temerity to deny:— The salaries and rations of the metropolitan Poor Law officers have increased from about £70,000 a year in 1853, when the first return was made, to £174,000 a year for 1867. From this calculation the City of London is excluded, as it made no reliable return. Deducting the cost of lunatics in asylums, the interest on loans, and the other expenses incidental to relief, it will be found that the sum expended for the maintenance and relief of the poor varies extremely in its relation to the cost of administration in different districts. For the year 1867 the amount spent was £708,815, and the salaries were £115,834, or 16 per cent. The Guardians of Whitechapel expended in relief £18,536, at a cost of £5,152, or 28.6 per cent. The Guardians of Bethnal Green expended £22,451 in relief and maintenance, and paid £3,106 in salaries, whilst those

of Shoreditch spent only £600 more, and yet their charge for salaries was £5,343, or no less than 23 per cent. The Guardians of Rotherhithe and St. Olave's paid 30 per cent. in salaries, whilst in the Strand Union the administration of £17,725 cost £4,460. The expenditure of £15,300 in St. George the Martyr, Southwark, cost nearly £1,000 more than the administration of £14,305 in the next parish of St. Mary, Newington, and for the same expenditure the Camberwell Guardians pay £500 per annum more in salaries than do their Wandsworth neighbours.

If, then, it be asked, How are the already over-burdened ratepayers to escape further taxation if taxes on voluntary labour be remitted? we reply, Let the cost of management—or rather, in too many cases, of *mis*-management—be at once reduced, and then there will not only be a margin for the relief of Ragged and Sunday Schools, but a general reduction in the taxes professedly collected for the support of indoor and outdoor pauperism.

With the view of obtaining relief from this grievous fine on Sunday and Ragged Schools, a society called "The Sunday and Ragged Schools Rating Exemption Association" has just been formed in London. Auxiliaries in Manchester, Birmingham, and other large towns, are about to be established. The London Committee includes representatives of the "Sunday School Institute," the "Sunday School Union," and the "Ragged School Union," and delegates from every religious denomination, all of whom are interested in the religious education of the young. According to the last census, they had under their care, in Sunday Schools, no less than 2,411,544 scholars; being about 12 per cent. of the population, and that number has increased rather than diminished. Mr. C. Reed, M.P., who is chairman of the London Association, has, at the request of the Committee, agreed to introduce a Bill to exempt Sunday and Ragged Schools from parochial taxation. Many members of Parliament have already pledged themselves to support the Bill, and we trust our readers will at once write to their local members and urge them to vote for the remission of this tax on voluntary labour. The Bill is as follows:—

(Draft) Bill to exempt Sunday and Ragged Schools in Great Britain from Liability to be rated to the Relief of the Poor.

Whereas, for many years, and until lately, the Sunday and Ragged Schools for the religious and gratuitous education of the children of the poor in England, enjoyed by construction of law an exemption from poor-rate, similar to that conferred by statute on charitable institutions in Ireland,

and on chapels and other places of religious worship in Great Britain, even where such chapels or places of worship or any vestry-rooms belonging thereto are used for Sunday or Infant Schools or for the charitable education of the poor. And whereas, numerous premises in Great Britain are now occupied for Sunday and Ragged Schools, in which 3,000,000 of scholars are receiving free instruction; and in connection with such premises a very large amount of gratuitous agency is constantly employed, and the services of the persons thus engaged tend greatly to the general welfare of the people; but the liability of these premises to be rated to the relief of the poor interferes with the establishment and maintenance of the schools, and it is therefore expedient that Sunday and Free Ragged Schools should be exempted from such liability.

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:—

1. From and after the thirtieth day of September, One thousand eight hundred and sixty-nine, no persons or person shall be rated or rateable to or be liable to pay rates or assessments for the relief of the poor in respect of their or his occupation of any land or building, or part of a building used for the purposes of a Sunday or Ragged School.
2. This Act shall not extend to Ireland.
3. The Act may be cited as the "Sunday and Ragged Schools (Exemption from Rating) Act, 1869."

The following model petition is recommended for the signature of teachers and friends of Sunday and Ragged Schools:—

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The Humble Petition of the undersigned,

Sheweth,

That Sunday and Ragged Schools are conducted for the religious and moral training of the Children of all classes of society, more especially of the Poor, and tend to the promotion of the general welfare of the people, and the prevention of pauperism and crime.

That Buildings in which these Schools are conducted have from their first establishment, never, till within the last four years, been rated to the relief of the Poor.

That these Schools are almost entirely taught by unpaid Teachers, many of whom from their private resources partly support the Schools in which they teach, and the funds are wholly drawn from the voluntary contributions of the public.

That large numbers of the Schools have great difficulty in meeting their expenses; and many of them, notwithstanding every economy, are in debt to their Treasurers.

That the levying of this new tax imposed under an old Statute will tend greatly to injure these Schools, and retard their usefulness.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that the Bill now before your Honourable House, entitled, "The Sunday and Ragged Schools Rating Exemption Act, 1868," may become law.

In reply to a question put by Mr. Whelthouse, M.P., Mr. Goschen said "it would bevery difficult to confine any exemption to public hospitals, infirmaries, dispensaries for the sick, and endowed almshouses. Sunday Schools, for instance, were omitted from the list; and, again, there was the question of endowed schools. If they exempted endowed almshouses, the question would arise whether they should not exempt endowed schools, and then came public buildings generally. The whole question was an exceedingly large and complicated one, and it was not the intention of Government to take any steps in the matter this session."

But we are loath to anticipate any failure in this combined movement for freeing voluntary religious labourers from taxation; for the larger question, whether hospitals and endowed almshouses should also be exempted from parochial taxation, we leave to the wisdom of Parliament, as we believe that our claim, as religious teachers, rests on a different footing, and gives us the same claim to exemption as is already acccorded to churches and chapels. Nor can we believe, when these facts are brought under the notice of our Senators, that they will permit such a crying evil to be unredressed—a grievance be it remembered which was not originated by any statute, but which is based solely on the construction of an almost obsolete act passed in the days of "Good Queen Bess."

But if these remarks apply to ordinary Sunday Schools, how much more are they applicable to Ragged Schools? For example, notwithstanding all the economy exercised, fifty-six London Ragged Schools reported last year an aggregate debt of £4,207. As it is proverbially the "last straw which breaks the camel's back," it is clear that, if such schools are to be mulcted in parish rates, their extinction, in many cases, can only be a question of time. And what can the social result be but most disastrous? It is asserted, on good authority, that every criminal costs the public £300 before his course is ended, to say nothing of the large amount plundered—averaging about £300 per annum—before his conviction. If this be the case, who can possibly estimate the amount saved to the public through the influence of Ragged Schools, including as they do, in London alone, 51,501 children and adults?

By training the young to habits of industry and prudence, they have, in fact, done more than the whole Poor Law Board, with its army of officials, to suppress that *hereditary* pauperism which forms the staple of Pauperdom. And we must say that we consider that it is but a poor recompense for the self-denying labours of our 3,247 voluntary teachers to mulct them in a heavy fine for thus striving to socialise and to save the wild tribes of London. Rather, if it is better to prevent than to punish, they ought to be regarded as public benefactors, and as such to be venerated rather than to be heavily taxed for their services to the public.

We have never asked for public money to subsidise Sunday or Ragged Schools; for, labouring for God as well as for man, we have looked to Him alone for agents and for the needful silver and gold. But we do think that, whilst we are admitted to be doing a good work for society at large—civilising a class who treat prison discipline as lightly as a cobweb—we ought to be exempt from State taxes, for such poor-rates really are, based as they are on a judicial construction of an old statute. Although these, and similar arguments, have had little weight on Parliament, we trust that this, the first session of a Reformed one, will inaugurate a juster principle. Then will Sunday and Ragged Schools go on with renewed vigour in their great battle with social vice, and its giant shadow misery, until the waste places of our great cities are reclaimed, and become as gardens which "the Lord's right hand hath planted."

THE MAN AT THE WHEEL.

BY THE REV. J. E. NASSAU.

DESCENDING the St. Lawrence river a few weeks ago, we encountered the well known series of rapids, that possess such fascination for travellers on our northern border, and which render a trip down that noble stream of such exciting interest. The descent, though not without danger, is almost always accomplished in safety. Peril after peril is quickly passed. The wild foaming waters of the Long Sault, the Cascades, the Cedars, and other less formidable rapids, are in succession left behind, and at length the stormy breakers of La Chine appear. Before entering these, our good steamer, burdened with freight and passengers, as if sensible of the risks she was about to run, slackened her speed opposite the Indian village of Caughnawaga, to receive an experienced pilot named Batiste, to whose superior management the vessel was forthwith resigned. He immediately became the most important person on board. All eyes turned to him, and all felt safer at the thought that a helmsman so tried and capable had control, and

was, for the time, virtually captain. How easily his broad shoulders seemed to assume the difficult, and really solemn responsibility of his position! Instinctively the exclamation rose from more than one heart, "God bless the man at the wheel!" Misgivings subsided as the vessel obeyed his firm and skilful hand, and darted by the perilous rocks, as if in quest of serener water; and soon, as the sun went down behind Mount Royal, we glided quietly into our desired port.

How much we owe, in the voyage of life, to the men at the wheel—to those who possess the qualifications, and are clothed with the responsibilities of leaders, guides, and exemplars—who preside at the sources of influence in the family, the state, and the church! God bless our parents, and teachers of every grade and name; the eminent scholars, writers, and speakers of our day; our legislators, judges, magistrates, and all charged with official trusts, and cause them ever to exert a benign and holy influence! The men of thought and action, of authority and fitness, of enthusiasm and constancy, of faith and prayer, must be men of power, as heads of families, as leaders of public opinion and enterprise, as representatives of the learned professions, as incumbents of office, as zealous, self-denying agents in every good word and work.

Among these are the educators of mind, the instructors of the heart, the architects of home, the framers of society, the founders of nations, and master-builders in the kingdom of God. Of their influence, operating often silently, in shaping individual life and character, and social experiences, and enduring results, we are unmindful. But however unnoticed or prominent, they are the main-springs of the human race, and are working the wheels of time. They hold in their influential hands vast and wonderful issues. In a grand sense, and in an important measure, their thoughts, and actions, and example affect the present and future of every human interest in the household, community, the church, and the world. Weal or woe is intimately linked to their discharge, neglect, or abuse of trusts so precious. We may well invoke heavenly wisdom and benedictions in their behalf, that, having power with God, they may prove beneficent to men, and honour the Most High in blessing their generation.

How important, too, that the men at the wheel be themselves awake to the responsibilities of their position, and have grace to meet them! The helm is not the post for a dreamer or a trifler. It is a place for vigilance, and skill, and energy, and other high and varied qualifications. Those to whom such a charge is confided must give account of the manner in which they meet it. They have in hand solemn and arduous work. The vital and manifold interests of their fellow-mortals hang on their faithfulness and success. It is in their power to avert great evil, and confer much blessing. They are the trustees of their generation. Surely they need and have a right to expect the sympathy, support, confidence, and encouragement of those who lean upon them. They should not be suffered to feel that they stand alone, much less be made the objects of causeless blame or cruel criticism. They deserve more generous treatment. In return for the benefits they confer, let us cheerfully yield them what requitals we may of love and gratitude.

We can, at least in our prayers, remember the men at the wheel.

A WELSH MISSION NIGHT SCHOOL.

THIS School was started by one teacher only. Unaided in any way, he took the responsibility and work upon himself; and it was not until two or three months after, when the number of boys had very much increased, that he sought the aid of another teacher. No one but those who really have had to do with the school can form any idea of what we have had to put up with; annoyances and insults in every possible shape and form, had not only to be borne, but borne with patience, and met with kindness and not severity. Whatever success has been attained in the moral cultivation of the boys, has had to be fought for step by step, by combating their prejudices, and appealing to their feelings, rather than to their sense of what was right.

Many of these boys, in the earlier months of the school's existence, came there under the notion that as it was a Night School, they were free to do as they liked, and thought that the restraint of the Sunday School was not to be put upon them on week-days. Thus it was only after a close study of each boy's character and disposition, and seeking to win them over to better things by treating them according to the result of that study, that they have been gradually brought to behave better: this accomplished, they were easily dealt with after.

But it must not be supposed that their behaviour is now all we could wish, far from it; occasional outbreaks are constantly occurring, and for a time there is a return to their old ways; when as one of the boys forcibly put it when asked what he meant by such bad behaviour, said, "Don't know, teacher; I s'pose the bad spell is on me, and I can't help it." Sometimes we get a quiet, orderly school for five or six weeks running, and then all at once the spark, in the shape, perhaps, of a new boy, or an outbreak in an old one, is applied to the powder magazine, and in an instant all is confusion and uproar. Let us give an example of one of these outbreaks. It is against the rules of the school for any boy to leave his class without permission: you all at once discover a seat empty, and ask where so-and-so is; you are told, perhaps, that he is under the bench; you look, and by that time he is probably at the other end of the school; you search for him, guided for the most part by the scraping or rustling you hear, and hasten to the place, when probably before you get there you hear a cat-call, or some noise in quite another part altogether. Now as long as the hiding boy is silent, you can depend on all the others being so, but once let him give forth a sound, and then, just like a pack of hounds when the game is started, you will see the boys swarming in every direction in full pursuit; then there is nothing to be done but to sit down quietly and tell them that when they have finished their game you will go on with the lessons. It is useless to attempt to catch them, for you have no sooner caught one, than directly your back is turned he is off again. Ten chances to one but that while you are waiting for them to come back, if the cause of the uproar does not suddenly pop up by your side most unaccountably with the question, "Couldn't you find me, teacher?" or else he will give you a full explanation of how he managed to dodge you, and he will say it in such a way that you cannot correct him; indeed, you

will find it a difficult matter to keep from joining in the laughter of the boys, who are by this time all around you.

Some of you may say that we ought to punish one of them as an example to the rest: to those who may think thus, we beg to say that the philosophy of experience has taught the *Principal of St. Andrew's College, Baptist Court, Swansea*, that sugar has more sweetening properties than essence of birch. That we have a cane in the school is true, but only once during the year has it been used as a means of punishment. In dismissing the school one night, Mr. Jones stood at the door with the candle in his hand, wishing the boys good night; suddenly one of the boys popped back, and, with one blow of his cap, hit the candle in Mr. Jones's hand into a flat cake of tallow. Quick as thought Mr. Jones dropped the candlestick *and the tallow*, made a grasp at the boy, and caught him by the ear; he held him until a light was procured, and then administered to his back three or four sharp cuts with the cane, and sent him off. A few minutes afterwards, when we got into the street, Mr. Jones was severely struck with a stone; turning round he saw the boy whom he had beaten running up the street. The boy did not come to school the following week-night; in closing school that night, Mr. Jones alluded to the fact, when a boy said, "I know who threw the stone, teacher, 'twas—" "Hush!" interrupted Mr. Jones, "I have forgiven him for doing it, and do not wish his name mentioned." A brother of the boy was present, and no doubt told him what had been said, for the following Sunday he came to school, and going shyly up to Mr. Jones, said, "Teacher, may I sit by you as I used to?"

The work of the school consists in teaching to read, write, spell, and cipher, by reading something interesting from a book or newspaper, by singing one or two hymns, and closing with prayer, latterly one of the boys being selected to say the Lord's Prayer, which all the boys join in repeating. At first there was a difficulty in getting a boy to lead off the others, but now there are generally half-a-dozen anxious to do it. There are 45 names on the register, the lowest attendance, since an account has been kept, is 15, the highest 35, average 25. Our Sunday School boys are admitted free, but any boy not attending our school has to pay one penny per month.

A set of rules, signed by ten of the boys on behalf of the others, has been drawn up jointly; the usual mode of punishing any boy for breaking the rules is by imposing a fine. How far these rules have been observed may be gathered from the fact that 3d. only has been received for fines. The third rule has been found to work remarkably well; it appoints six of the best behaved boys to act as a jury to decide on any case of insubordination. It works in this way: suppose a boy has done something contrary to rule; when the books are closed and lessons done with for the night, six boys are selected, and the complaint is laid before them; they listen to what the boy has to say in extenuation of his conduct, and any boy has the right of pleading for the offender. When the jury have heard both sides of the question, they discuss it, and, unlike ordinary jurymen, you have the privilege of hearing their arguments for and against the culprit, and it is highly amusing to hear them sometimes. In bringing in their verdict, one particular boy generally contrives to be spokesman for the party, and he is pleased to call himself the foreman of the right honourable grand jury. He

has somehow managed to pick up a few assize court phrases, and delights to use them on every opportunity. Here is a sample speech:—"May it please your lordship, we find as how the prisoner at the bar, James Evans, better known as Tumpo, is guilty to all intents and purposes of the act, and we recommend to your lordship to pass a sentence, and inflict a fine of one ha'penny, such ha'penny to bear the image of our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria, and none of your Brumagen buttons, or French thing-amy-jigs with Bony's long nose and stachers on it; and as this is the third time that he has been fined, we beg your lordship to dismiss him from the school, as us don't approve of him."

This report would be incomplete without some reference to the financial position of the school. Previous to September last, all expenses incurred were paid by ourselves, but in the month referred to Mr. Jones was so far encouraged with the progress of the boys, that he determined to supply the school with every requisite necessary for making it really useful; some of the things he paid for himself, but there is still due £1 16s. 11d. for books, slates, pencils, pens, ink, and blackboard. If this debt was by any means wiped off, our financial prospects for the future would be most encouraging, for Mrs. Jones has kindly undertaken to collect from some half-dozen of her friends a subscription of a penny a week. Mrs. Jones commenced her work of financier about a month before Christmas, and our accumulated funds in the bank, the chief office of which is held in Baptist Court, amounts already to the sum of six (not paltry thousands, hundreds, or even golden guineas) but six bright silver shillings and elevenpence, bearing the image of her most gracious majesty Queen Victoria.

A NEW CUT MOTHERS' MEETING.

AT the annual meeting of the Mothers' Meeting held in Robert Street, New Cut, some interesting particulars were given by its conductor, Mrs. Evans, a true "mother in Israel." We had the privilege of aiding in its formation above ten years ago, and gladly attest the blessing which has rested upon this meeting from the outset. When it is stated that the bulk of the members are the wives of costermongers and fish-hawkers, it will be seen how much it was needed by this degraded district. But, happily, by the grace of God, not only have many poor women been saved from drunkenness and beggary, but, savingly converted, they are God's lights in this benighted locality.

In taking a retrospective view of the past, we are constrained to say hitherto that the Lord helped us, and, in looking forward to the future, we rely upon the promise, The Lord will provide. Our meetings are very much increased; the number on our books 174, the average attendance about 90, but very often a great many more, so that we scarce know what to do with them.

We have a Clothing and Boot Club. The boots, through the kindness of a friend, we are enabled to supply at wholesale prices, thus giving to the poor a new boot for little more than they could obtain old ones. Many of

the children thus get boots, as they bring their half-pence, and even farthings, which they would have spent on the Sabbath. We have a Benevolent Society, which lends poor women a box of clothing, and other articles necessary for their comfort during their confinement. One hundred have had the box during the past year. With these has been given 100 quarts of oatmeal, 100 lbs. of sugar, 12½ lbs. of tea, 60 lbs. of soap, 400 articles of baby-clothing, besides many warm flannel garments to the mothers, and £10 10s. in money.

We have quarterly sales. At these sales are sold not only new garments, but any old ones that we can get given to us; we have found this the best way to prevent jealousy arising from giving things away. The old ones are sold at a mere nominal price, especially to the most deserving; thus—waiscoat, 1d; trowsers, 2d., 3d., or more, as the case may be. The sale of the old clothes enables us to sell the new ones at less than cost, to provide blankets to lend in the winter, and articles of wearing apparel and bed-linen in time of affliction, or for any, either men or women, who may be in affliction or have to go into our hospitals. We have also during the past year assisted many girls with clothing when going to situations during the inclement weather of 1867 and 1868. We distributed in bread, tea, sugar, soup, etc., the sum of £18, all of which we believe came in answer to prayer for help from our Heavenly Father, as not one of the friends sending the money was appealed to. The annual tea, we feel, is also supplied in the same way. Help has also come to our Benevolent Society from the same source, as an unknown friend has sent us a box of clothing to be lent out and called the grandmother's box. Thus does our Heavenly Father help us in our work for the poor and needy: thus, and in many other ways, have we been enabled to help them temporally.

But our highest aim is the salvation of their souls; and in this we have not been disappointed, for many have joined Christian churches, and are now living holy lives. During the past year, three of our number passed away to the spirit land, leaving behind them a testimony that they had gone to be with Jesus. On asking one when dying, when it was thought she was unconscious, "Do you know me?" a smile lighted up the dying sufferer's face as she said, "Oh, yes! you brought me to Jesus at those Mothers' Meetings, and I am happy. Take off your glove and let me grasp your hand as I have done many times," which she did with both hands, and being only able to utter one sentence at a time, entreated God's blessing upon the Mothers' Meetings. This scene will not soon be forgotten.

Another, when dying, leaving seven orphan children, expressed her confidence that God would provide for them, which indeed proved to be the case, as they were all taken into orphan homes. Another was suddenly taken away, but still in her last moments said she was "trusting to Jesus."

One poor woman was so distressed at this tea meeting, that she begged the conductor to go and pray with her; and when she got home she took her children round her and tried to pray with them.

This is our reward in our work. For it is still true that he who "goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

PRIZE SCHOLARS' MEETING.

On Tuesday, March 16th, the sixteenth Prize Scholars' Meeting was held at Exeter Hall. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided. Amongst those present we noticed—Sir R. W. Carden; Rev. J. Rooker and H. Sinden; Dr. Cross and Dr. Cory; the Mayor of Windsor; Messrs. J. Payne, J. Lawrie, R. Morley, etc., etc. The hall was crammed to overflowing with the Prize Scholars and friends. Each school brought its banner, no familiar name or device being absent, and the scene was highly pleasing and suggestive. The platform and side galleries were occupied by the supporters of the movement, who mustered in great force to welcome the children and applaud the efforts of the earnest teachers. On their arrival, the children were regaled with light refreshments, and, thus fortified, they were enabled to give due effect to the vocal portion of the programme. After prayer and singing, Mr. Gent then made the following statement:—

The sixteenth annual distribution of these scholars' prizes takes place this evening.

The rules under which they have been awarded are now well known in the London schools, and have been subjected to but slight verbal alterations for several years. For fourteen years the average number of prizes successfully claimed was 580, but last year the number was 681, and the number to be distributed to-night is 728, or 148 above the average of fourteen years.

The applications this year have been made by 86 schools, and the number of applicants for prizes has been 841. Of this number, 426 were boys, and 415 were girls, the boys exceeding the girls by 11. But on a scrutiny of the papers it appeared that 70 boys could not stand the test, nor could 43 of the girls; these numbers taken from the total show the successful claimants to be 372 girls, and 356 boys. The successful girls, therefore, exceed the successful boys by 16. Last year the girls were 43 ahead, and the year before their majority was 23. Of the 728 who take the prizes to-night, 254, namely, 111 boys, and 143 girls, took prizes in previous years, and some of these have been successful for five consecutive years, and are here to-night for the last time, as next year they will be above age.

The prize awarded to the girls is a handsomely-bound illustrated copy of the "Young Pilgrim," by A. L. O. E., and to the boys has been awarded a very suitable and beautiful book, entitled "All round the World," the publishing price of which is five shillings. Those who to-night come up for the first time take the money prize of 7s. 6d., of which 5s. is paid by the Ragged School Union fund, and 2s. 6d. from the school fund.

These money prizes have been granted to 245 boys, and 228 girls, total 473, who are here to-night for the first time. To each of the whole of the successful claimants has been awarded, in addition to the book or money, an embellished card, which indicates the character and the time the situation has been held, and bears the signatures of the president, Lord Shaftesbury, and the secretary to the society.

The situations held by these young people have been retained in some

cases for a long period, one having kept his post for ten years without changing, and none for less than twelve months. The papers show that

427	held their places	from 1	to 2 years.
228	„	„	2 to 3 years.
113	„	„	3 to 4 years.
46	„	„	4 to 5 years.
27	„	„	5 years and upwards.

Notwithstanding the rules having been widely distributed, yet some scholars have applied who are too young, and others too old. Three of the applicants were under twelve years of age, and three above eighteen years. Of those who come within the rules

89	were	from 12 to 13	years of age.
158	„	13 to 14	„
194	„	14 to 15	„
192	„	15 to 16	„
118	„	16 to 17	„
86	„	17 to 18	„

The committee are glad to notice that nearly three-fourths of the girls who have applied for prizes are employed in families as domestic servants. They, from the nature of their employment, are unable as a rule to give attendance at a Sunday School; there are, however, many excellent exceptions, and when the opportunity is possessed to attend, it is nearly always embraced. In all other cases, both girls and boys, the attendance at a Sunday School is imperative, and this rule has a most beneficial influence in retaining for a lengthened period a connection of the old scholars with the schools, and in some cases it is hoped this is a means for real spiritual good to the young people.

The experience the committee have gained from the prize scheme as hitherto carried out, leads them to think that the time, the labour, and the cost expended in relation to it, tend much to encourage scholars to prepare for and desire places, and when obtained to keep them with the desired good character, that they may be among those who come forward to take their honours from the hand of Lord Shaftesbury, the children's friend.

The committee are glad to perceive that their plan is in some cases supplemented by efforts of a similar kind to recognise worth in the scholar now a servant, but who does not come within the society's rules. They are also pleased to see that the friends of Ragged Schools in some of the great cities and towns of England are turning their attention to prize schemes for the encouragement of good servitude in their former scholars.

The mode adopted in London has helped the formation of good character, has helped to encourage patient industry, has helped to convert the waifs and strays of society into useful men and women, and what it has done in London it is capable of doing in all other places; and if proof be required we would quote from the monument of the great Sir Christopher Wren, and say, "Look around."

Mr. J. Payne then addressed the meeting with one of those unique speeches which, from their combined wit and wisdom, delight all, old or young, and then concluded with the following 2,437th tail-piece:—

Children of all sorts and sizes,
Who have come to take your prizes
From the hand of one who loves you,
And ahead in kindness shoves you;
Thank him for his friendly action,
Try to give him satisfaction.

Teacher of all ranks and classes,
Striving to improve the masses,
See the produce of your labours,
For the welfare of your neighbours;
And your little power confessing,
Thank "the Almighty" for His blessing.

Pleas'd *spectators* of this gathering,
See how love does more than lathering;
See how prudence, care, and kindness,
Tell in lessening mental blindness;
And resolve that you will aid us
To love the work of serving Jesus.

God of glory, God of goodness,
From our souls remove the rudeness;
Make it look both smooth and splendid,
And when earthly work is ended,
Pay us with celestial treasure,
In thy heaven of endless pleasure.

A beautiful series of dissolving views, illustrating the "Life, Times, and Travels of St. Paul," were exhibited by Mr. J. Harris, and explained by Mr. T. Brooker, both members of the committee of the Central Society. We need not say that all were delighted with an entertainment which, from first to last, was of a thoroughly Christian character.

At the close of this entertainment, the noble President spoke a few earnest words to the prize scholars. He said, "My dear children, you did not come to-night to hear speeches, but to have a jollification; and you have had that, and also something still better. I cannot help expressing my delight with all I have seen this night. Every time I see you there is some improvement evident, and that is due to your kind teachers, and the way in which you listen to their instructions. Go on as you have begun, and you will not only be a comfort to your teachers, but an honour to Ragged Schools. I need not say any more at this late hour than to wish you all Good-night, and may God bless you all."

THE BOOK-HAWKER'S SON.

His father was at one time in business as a printer, in London, but through drunkenness and dissipation he lost business and home also. Reduced as low as he possibly could be, he travelled about the country, hawking illustrated Bibles, published in monthly parts, and other publications. He

scarcely remained in one town more than a week or two. He had no home, although his wife travelled with him, with this boy, who was then very young. This life was followed for several years by the parents, until about five or six years ago, when the poor woman died at Derby, during one of their itinerant strolls. The father continued the same unsettled life, and a year or two after he married again; but, alas! as so often is the case, his second wife never took kindly to this poor boy.

They came to London, and had a home, but, as the boy says, "My father could never keep a penny in his pocket, it always went in drink, and my stepmother was no better, for she liked drink quite as much as my father." Is not this a sad confession for a poor child to make concerning those who ought to have protected and comforted the little fellow, and set a good example before him?

The result of this dissipation and vice was just what invariably follows from such a life of misery and wretchedness. The father's home had to be parted with again, and once more he entered upon the book-hawking business. It was now inconvenient for the boy to accompany them, and so he was placed with a small coffee-shop keeper, but as the proprietor could obtain no money from the father, which he promised to send for the support of the boy, he was turned adrift to shift for himself as best he could, like so many are compelled to do. Thus he was left homeless and destitute, and not knowing where to find his father, he started off into the country. He knew the main roads out of London, so he went in the direction of Ware. Near that town a farmer took compassion on him, and hired him at 3s. a week, and a Sunday's dinner. A woman at a lodge also pitied him, and consented to keep him for the 3s. a week. Here he remained about five months, but unfortunately he met with an accident while driving the farmer's cart, and he was summarily discharged.

He left Ware, came to London, and went down to the Docks, to try if he could get to sea. He did not succeed, and while sitting on Tower Hill he attracted the attention of a respectable man, who was moved by his loneliness and forlorn appearance, and on speaking to the boy ascertained he wanted to go to sea. He thereupon took him by the hand, gave him something to eat and drink at a coffee-shop, procured him a night's lodging in a casual ward, and then, what was better still, went the next morning, took possession of the little wanderer, and brought him to the St. Giles's Refuge, where he now is.

No tidings have been gained of the unnatural father at present, and whether he will ever see his child again the present winter will determine. Consumption has evidently laid hold of the frail bark, and it is only a question of a few months as to when the immortal spirit of the lad will wing its way to where "they hunger no more, neither thirst any more, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

OUR BARN.

This word, and what it represents, stands connected with the earliest recollections of many of us. It was a place for childish sports, and afterwards a place of youthful labour in the harvest-time. Since then we have other associations connected with the worship of God, and the proclamation of truth to rustic audiences.

But leaving what is personal, let us come to what is general, and inquire, What are the uses of a *barn?* It is a gathering place for the crop of corn; also a place where various things are done connected with husbandry, such as threshing, winnowing, &c. A barn is also a storehouse, from whence that which produces the bread of this life is sent forth.

Such should every church or assembly of Christians be. There we should gather souls together to hear the word of God. The harvest is plenteous; let each Christian try to gather in some.

There the ministers of Christ must thresh and winnow. In order to do this, they must strike home, and "separate the precious from the vile."

From hence the true corns of wheat must go forth, to make bread for God's family. Each one must grind and knead it by meditation; and this exercise will be pleasant and profitable.

Seed-corn must also be sent out: "seed for the sower," as well as "bread for the eater" (Isa. lv. 10, 11). "From you sounded out the word of the Lord" (1 Thess. i. 8). Happy the church of whom this may be said: "Their resources are inexhaustible, and they need not fear being liberal in dispersing truth!"

Let us just glance at the design of this word "*barn*," as a *figure* in God's book. Passing by the rich fool and his barns—reading as we pass, inscribed on the door, "*Thou fool*," written very largely—we look at two passages (in Matt. iii. 12, xiii. 30), where we read, "*the garner*," "*my barn*." In eastern countries we suppose that barns were *granaries*. They did not put the unthreshed corn there, but pure grain, separated from weeds, straw, and chaff. So God's wheat—the righteous—will soon be gathered into his barn. That barn will be a safe one. No fire can burn it, no vermin shall infest it, no thief ever reach it. Each grain in that vast granary, that glorious barn, will have in it a germ of life; and we may expect to see God sow the universe with blessing by means of this wheat gathered into his barn, thus making the saved ones a "kind of first-fruits of his creatures."

GOVERNMENT AND THE EDUCATION OF POOR CHILDREN IN LARGE TOWNS.

On March 13th, Mr. Melly, M.P., after stating that thousands of children do not attend any school, moved for a Committee of the House of Commons to consider the education of poor children in large towns. After an interesting discussion, the motion was withdrawn; Mr. Forster, the Vice-President

of the Privy Council on Education, having promised to undertake an inquiry regarding four of the principal towns, and he having agreed to lay on the table a synopsis of the method which he suggests for the purpose. An inquiry by persons who are specially apart for this duty will, no doubt, be prosecuted with greater rapidity and thoroughness than by a Committee of the House of Commons. The Government investigators will go down to the various towns, they will visit the schools, they will hear evidence from all sides, and they will personally inspect the condition of the young. They may also examine into the efficiency of the schools already in existence, and, in short, they may travel over the ground already so laboriously traversed by Mr. Melly and his friends in Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham, for the purpose of compiling the results in an authentic form for the use of Parliament.

We cannot but express our hope that, whoever may be appointed to make this investigation, will not conduct it in a one-sided spirit. Then we shall not have to complain, as we did respecting the inquiry into the education of the poor in the year 1858, that the Commissioners either ignored Ragged Schools, or underrated the attendance. Fearing no inquiry, either in London or in the provinces, all we require—and with less we ought not to be satisfied—is that our friends shall be heard as well as our enemies.

Poet's Corner.

CRY OF THE CHILDREN.

"LIST to the cry of the children, O my brothers,"
Rising from suffering and direst need—
Children denied the tenderness of mothers,
Waifs on the world, to misery decreed.

See in your fancy their half-famished faces,
Looking so piteous 'mid surrounding gloom,
Divest of all the qualifying graces
That in the realm of childhood find a room;

Dreaming of joy, from their young gaze withholden,
Of tantalizing pleasures at their lips;
While all the glory of life's morning golden
Is dark and drear with poverty's eclipse.

How their young eyes, unconscious of its meaning,
Look cravingly on what may not be theirs;
On luxury and pleasure supervening,
That affluence, in lavish plenty, shares;

Feeling their clay is coarser in God's vision,
If aught of God upon their thought obtrudes;
Their lives a butt for cruel fate's derision,
And not for them the sweet beatitudes!

The bitter cup is theirs alone, for draining—
They have no interest in love's estate,
And, every childish attribute profaning,
They yield themselves to wretchedness and hate.

What hope hear they from the dark ruin calling?
What light can reach their gloom-beshrouded souls?
The blight of death around their path is falling,
The only fortune life unto them doles!

Do ye not hear the children, O my brother—
Their sorrows pleading with a tongueless speech
We cannot, if we would, our feelings smother,
We cannot check the hand's extended reach.

Here sow your seed, the fallow ground is broken,
The warming sun of truth pervades the sod,
And every germ, a word that's fitly spoken,
Shall grow and blossom in the airs of God.

Save them from want, save them from sin's defiling;
Give your glad teaching to their tender ears,
Their saddened tears to joyfulness beguiling:
Plant hope and faith instead of doubts and fears.

Then in the harvest will be compensation,
A garner full of blessedness and peace;
And the sweet glow of after contemplation
Shall light your way when mortal life shall cease.

Teachers' Column.

ALL FOR JESUS: A SKETCH.

Note that modest cottage in a quiet street of the suburbs, whence issues a gentlemanly man punctually at half-past five every Sunday afternoon. Hundreds of such unpretentious buildings may be found surrounding every large city, but few resemble it internally. Many houses of like build in its vicinity are furnished more gaily, but scarcely one containing so large a library. The half-hour chimes are heard; the owner is at the entrance, and with a kiss and a "Good-bye," he steps out into the pouring rain. He is a widower, and has left all—aged mother, admiring sister, beloved children, sumptuous books, and comfortable fireside—to reach a sink of iniquity, some three miles off, where there is a cheerless room, badly ventilated, poorly warmed, and somewhat damp, and where he is rarely thanked for his self-denial. But—it is all for Jesus!

Praying, and meditating, and asking in all humility, for the blessed guidance of the Holy Spirit, he walks the three miles' distance and scarcely observes the rain. Absorbed in holy thought, he passes his companions of yore, and is pronounced "too proud and too pious to speak to his old wicked friends." But he is not so absorbed as not to pick up a fallen child and soothe it, and not too proud to

abstain from "handing" a blind beggar over a dangerous crossing. Nor is he "too pious" to speak to an "old wicked friend," would he but listen on soul-matters. But just now it is all for Jesus.

Arrived in the "guilt-garden," his eyes see little but sin, and his ears hear nothing ungarnished with oaths and blasphemy. The school which he has taken so much trouble to reach, and the scholars which he is about to teach, are familiar with these sounds. He is not. Then why does he come? He who has dreamed with Plato, and walked with Socrates, meditated with Milton, listened to Bacon, and argued with Newton! He to whom these men were as gods, and whom he worshipped as the Gueber the sun, from sparkling morn to dewy eve, and through the long cold night till morn came once more. Their names, with those of a thousand lesser lights, greet you in every room of his lowly cottage. Because he has humbled himself, has allowed the dust to settle on his gods of old, and is content to sit at the foot of the cross, and cry, "All for Jesus!"

Like St. Paul, he is willing to be a "fool" for Christ's sake, to descend to the lowest depths, if haply he might drag thence some who, through ignorance, have not known Christ. Quietly he teaches, and patiently he waits, and thinks himself highly honoured of his God and Saviour if he sees a glimmer of light in the soul of one of his benighted scholars, and marks with a red letter the day when one cries with him, "All for Jesus!" F.

MY EXPERIENCES.

THE "Sunday Teachers' Treasury" says:—"Much has been said, and many hints given, about Sunday-school teaching; and yet the subject is always new. This is to be expected; for the workers in the Lord's vineyard are always being renewed. Besides, a hint here and there about teaching may suit one and not another, but from various hints all may glean something.

Probably, as teachers, if we care at all, we all of us feel our need to be 'thoroughly furnished' for our work. Well, perhaps some may say, 'We have not the means of learning much, we have no commentaries, no maps, no Scripture illustrations.' That may be; and there is no doubt these things are a help, and perhaps give most knowledge with least study. And books of travel in Palestine and eastern countries do throw light upon many passages of Scripture.

I wish, however, to throw out two thoughts: First, that for a thorough understanding of the Bible, there is no light like that which comes from the Bible itself. We saw recently a letter from a missionary, giving an account of a very remarkable man who has recently become a Christian at a mission station. He was a heathen, but learned to read; and of the very few books in his language the Bible was one, and almost the only one he had. He did not believe in it or love it, and he read the Bible, not only for knowledge, but to be able to fight against Christianity and raise arguments and objections. Finally, the love of Christ subdued him, and he became a true Christian. And now his knowledge of the Bible is wonderful. He can quote any passage from Genesis to Revelation, and tell chapter and verse; and the missionary says his knowledge of truth and doctrine, of Bible history and prophecy, and its fulfilment, is something beyond that of any other man he knows.

Most people take up the Bible and read a bit here and a bit there, and think they have fulfilled a Christian duty. Is there any other book in the world that we should read in that way? How was it with this heathen? Did he not 'seek for wisdom as for hid treasure'? Nobody finds treasures by carelessly walking along the road, and now and then looking up or looking down. So if we have no other book but the Bible, a thorough knowledge of that should make one a first-rate Sunday-school teacher.

The second thing I have found in my experience is, that it is wise to encourage

our scholars to think and to ask questions, and if it happens to lead us a little away from our lesson no harm is done, and much good may be gained. The great point is to awaken their attention, not merely to pour a little instruction into their minds which may stay there or may run out again, but to awaken them to seek and to receive for themselves. We need not always moralize, nor always *preach* to them; and if they ask us knotty questions, so much the better. If we are not ready to answer them it is easy to say, 'We will study that or look it out for next Sunday.'

It is wise to bring many things to the test of the question, 'right or wrong.' No matter whose the act, even if it be o our Lord himself, let them not only see that it is right because he did it, but the *reason why*. It is well to accustom them to bring their own words and acts to the same question of right or wrong, and to be able to render a reason. Children are keen observers, and see or feel many things which they may not put into words. If we are faithful and prayerful, and make it our purpose to lead them in the way of life, there are some very strong promises which cannot fail."

Children's Gallery.

THE PINK TICKET.

One Sunday afternoon I had been talking of prayer to the sixty dear children who gathered in my infant-school. I said that "it is not praying unless we mind the things we say;" and that "God, for our Saviour's sake, listens to the wants of even his little children." Then, with folded hands, closed eyes, and low voices, we all said, "Our Father who art in heaven," and I dismissed the school.

As the scholars, one after another, left their seats, all paused to say, "Good-bye, teacher," till it came to little Annie's turn. She lingered one moment, then pressed close to my side, and looking up in my face with earnest eyes, said,—

"Miss A——, if we ask God for anything that we want very much, will he give it to us?"

I had only time to answer, "Yes, dear," and she was gone.

Another six days, and the bright Sunday afternoon found teachers and scholars assembled once more in the school-room. The hours passed quickly by. Each child had received a ticket, for they were all good, and of course happy. In our school every little boy and girl who is quiet and attentive gets a ticket, and after they have four blue ones, a large pink one; and then, after four pink ones, comes a beautiful book, full of pictures and stories, to keep for their own.

This day, as I was about to say "Good-bye" to little Annie, I thought she looked rather sorrowful. I asked her if she were not well. One second she was silent, and then said, with tearful eyes and quivering lips,—

"Yes, ma'am; but you did not tell me true last Sunday. God will not hear me when I pray."

I put my arm around the child, and, after the others had gone, I took her on my lap, and said, "Now, my dear, tell me all about it."

"Oh, Miss A——, you know next Sabbath the books are to be given out; and I have only three pink tickets and three blue ones, because one Sunday I was not here, and did not get any; and I want the book so much. So, last Sabbath, I ran home as fast as I could, took off my bonnet quick, ran up-stairs, and, when I had shut the

door, I kneeled down by a chair, and turned all the white sides of my tickets up; and then I prayed to God, as hard as I could, to make one of my blue tickets turn pink. But when I looked, they were all the same colour yet. Then I thought, perhaps I did not mind enough the things I said. So I put the white sides up again, and prayed. I told God how much I wanted the book, how happy it would make me; and I said what you told us,—'ask, and ye shall receive.' But it is not of any use; for here they are, now, three of each colour;" and she opened her little hand, while the tears streamed fast down her rosy cheeks.

I quietly took one of her blue tickets, and in its place I put a bright pink one, on which were these words: "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake;" and said, "Annie, that ticket is yours. Has not God answered your prayer, dear, though not in the way you expected?" The little face was quickly upturned to mine, while a happy smile took the place of the tear-drops.

Then I tried to explain to Annie that our Heavenly Father does hear the prayers of his children, and that it is right that they should go to him with all their little sorrows and troubles, just as they do to their father and mother in this world, though oftentimes he will see fit to deny their requests for their own good; and again, oftentimes answers them in the way they least expect. God does not work miracles any longer upon earth. He did not turn the blue paper pink; but he put it into the heart of little Annie to tell her teacher of her wants, and the longed-for ticket was hers, and next Sunday she received her new book; and I trust she will never forget, when she turns over its pages, that it was a gift from her Heavenly Father, who sent his own Son into the world to die for little children.

Editor's Note-book.

SELF OR CHRIST?

If I am not resting in the love of Christ, I cannot make his interests and his service here the simple object of my interest and attention. I cannot make another my object while my own interests are unassured; and this is the case more especially with the Lord, because the more I am awakened to a sense of who he is and of the value of his grace to me, the more I am urged thereby to be in assured peace before him.

Many an one is seeking to do a service, in order to reach this assured rest, instead of serving because he has reached it; and such an one betrays, in his course and service (he cannot help doing so), that he is seeking something to accrue to himself, to his own soul, for his service; consequently there is not singleness of eye in what he does. There cannot be singleness of eye when Christ is not the one simple object before the soul.

If I am in any degree an object to myself, if I need assured rest, this need must be paramount with me, and I cannot wholly devote myself to another. I must first be completely freed from all anxiety about myself. It will be found that when I am not simply resting in the assurance that I am Christ's object, the work and course I pursue, while often undertaken with great zeal, is really to effect something for myself instead of for Christ. It may not be anything so gross as to obtain a name or distinction among men; but it is to supply to myself a rest and

assurance which hitherto I have not had. And hence the work is the source of my happiness, and I judge of it by my success, and this ministers to myself. There is an effort to produce a certain effect on myself. My zeal may be exemplary and persistent; but necessarily I make the success or the effect on myself the criterion of my work. Christ is not the simple object, nor can he be, unless I know that I am his object, in the fulness of his love. When I know this he *is* my object. Everything I do, and everything I engage in, is with distinct reference to him.

VALUE OF ONE SOUL.

The eternal salvation of one soul, says Doddridge, is of greater importance than the temporal salvation of a whole kingdom or empire for ten thousand ages, or indeed any given duration of time. Because there will come up a point in eternity, when that one soul will have existed as many ages as all the individuals in a kingdom, ranged in close succession, will altogether have existed at that given period. Therefore one soul is capable of a larger share of happiness or misery to an endless eternity than all the inhabitants of a whole kingdom are capable of in ten thousand ages.

HUMILITY.

If thou art a vessel of gold, says Reynolds, and thy brother but of wood, be not high-minded: it is God that maketh thee to differ. The more bounty God shows, the more humility he requires: those mines that are richest are deepest; those stars that are highest seem smallest; the goodliest buildings have the lowest foundations; the more God honoureth men, the more they should humble themselves; the more fruit, the lower the branch on which it grows. Pride is ever the companion of emptiness.

Oh! how full was the apostle, yet how low was his language of himself—least of all saints, last of all apostles, chief of sinners; no sufficiency to think, no abilities to do; all that he is, he is by Divine grace.

Correspondence.

PROFESSIONAL BEGGARS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—The evils incident to indiscriminate alms-giving have often been discussed in your pages; and many startling facts have shown that to give to street beggars without inquiry, merely because they ask, is productive of evil both to giver and to receiver. Street beggars are mostly professional ones; and, as a rule, they tell lies all day, in order that they may feast like aldermen at night. Not that they feel the slightest respect for those who give without previous inquiry; for such persons are known among this wretched crew by the uncomplimentary nickname of "Soft Tommies;" and the silliness of their dupes, and the tales whereby they were caught, evoke peals of laughter whilst feasting before the roaring fire of the common "Lodging-house for Travellers" at night. But such laughter, after all, is but the "laughter of fools;" for they find in the end that, though they lived by deceiving others, they close their career by finding that they only deceived themselves.

But the question still remains—How shall we judge betwixt the professional beggar and those who are really out of work or are perishing for hunger? Nor is this easy; for we cannot always be certain that is a

Lazarus who shows us his "sores," seeing that capital imitation sores can be purchased in the "slums" of St. Giles, for 3s. 6d. each. Only the other day, we met a stalwart band of mock-sailors, who were showing their sores in one of our byeways. Seeing at a glance that they were bought at a wound-factory, we looked at the sores steadily as we passed, when the whole crew ran away as fast as they could, the legless (!) sailor being first in the race. So the other day, when visiting the Ragged Schools in the Devil's Acre, a man dogged us through the Park, saying that he had nothing to eat for forty-eight hours. Taken in, partly by his sad tale, but more by his careworn face, we went into a baker's shop to buy him a loaf, when lo! with a fierce look, he walked off cursing us, like another Shimei. Nor when we see a woman professedly a widow, with two infants in her arms, whom she slyly pinches to cause them to cry, can we be certain that they are her own children. For are they not lent out by gin-drinking mothers at 1s. per day for one, and 1s. 6d. for two infants?

It is not strange, then, that when we have inquired into the cases of those stalwart well-fed men who in gangs sing that dismal ditty, "We've *got* no work to do," we have found that the truest words would have been, "We *want* no work to do." These and similar facts lead to the impression that in most cases mend-*i*-city ought to be spelt mend-*a*-city!

That there are, however, still true Lazaruses there can be little doubt, mostly caused by mental or bodily weakness, and as such they have every claim upon our bounty. It is to this class our Lord probably referred when he said, "The poor ye have with you always." But still, what with private alms-giving, and the provision made for their needs by the poor law, the class of true beggars is much smaller than might be supposed. For cases of true need, some astute men at Blackheath—a district much infested by mendicants—have devised a novel plan, whereby the really needy have their cases investigated, and are helped out of their difficulties, whilst the beggar is detected and punished. The scheme adopted is as follows:—Every house in the neighbourhood of Blackheath has been supplied with a sheet of paper tickets. These being perforated are readily separated. When asked for charity, the reply is a *ticket!* Armed with this the beggar walks to the society's office, and his statements having been entered in a printed form, are placed in a sealed envelope directed to the relieving officer of the district. If he be an impostor, he never delivers the letter. If, after an official investigation, he is found to be deserving, he is sent to the clergyman or minister of the parish in which he resides, the society supplying funds for his relief. The expense of working the society is very little.

This plan is so adapted to the case and so simple that it needs no commendation. For whilst it admits that there are Lazaruses who still sit at the door of Dives, it prevents him from closing his heart and his purse altogether, on the pretext that there are so many professional beggars that he cannot discern between the impostor and the really needy mendicant. Let this plan be universally adopted, and the race of professional, we might say of *hereditary* beggars, will soon be ranked amongst the ichthyosaurians and other extinct reptiles.

Yours, &c.,

Q. IN THE CORNER.

Notices of Meetings.

BETHNAL-GREEN.

THE first annual meeting in connection with the above mission was held at the Mission-hall, 43, Old Castle-street, Shoreditch. Mr. Dunnington presided.

Mr. W. Jarvis, who has been mainly instrumental in establishing the mission, gave a brief account of its origin and the work which had been accomplished through its agency. The mission was first opened in September, 1867, the leading idea then being to gather in the adults from the surrounding back streets and courts. Failing, however, to secure the attendance of adults in any considerable number at their meetings, but seeing that children flocked to them, it had been determined to hold meetings for their special benefit on Monday and Wednesday evenings—the former as a children's service, the latter as a band of hope meeting. These meetings have been continued up to the present time, and are now well attended. A day school has been opened, in which secular and religious instruction is daily afforded to over 200 poor children. The attendance of Sunday-school scholars has been steadily maintained, and varies from 100 to 150. During the distress of last winter the mission had, with the aid of the East London Mission and the Relief Society, been enabled to carry on a sewing class among the distressed mothers, of whom between fifty and sixty were daily gathered in. Of the elder girls who had been regular attendants at the meetings of the mission no less than thirty had been clothed and sent out to domestic service, in which, with some exceptions, they were giving satisfaction. There had been expended altogether £380 3s. 8d., of which £185 14s. 9d. had gone in affording relief. The total receipts had been £337 0s. 6d., leaving a balance of £52 3s. 8d., which had been made up by the treasurer.

Addresses were delivered by the Rev. J. Edden, W. Booth, and others. The various speakers dwelt upon the ignorance, vice, and irreligion prevailing in Bethnal-green, the consequent need for the Gospel mission, and earnestly appealed to the benevolent public to assist them in the laudable efforts to grapple with these evils.

HINDE'S MEWS.

The 28th anniversary of this school was held on March 1st, at the lecture hall of the Young Men's Christian Association, Great Marlborough-street, George Hanbury, Esq., in the chair.

The report stated that the average attendance at the Sunday afternoon school was 100, and at the evening school, which has an inadequate supply of teachers, 130. During the past year a "Dorcas and Maternal Society" has been commenced. The funds for carrying on this invaluable auxiliary are not chargeable on the general fund, and contributions are greatly needed. The number of deposits last year in the penny bank was 1,556, and of withdrawals 337. The amount deposited £111 1s. 2½d., withdrawn, £100 13s. 8½d., leaving a balance in hand of £16 0s. 4½d. The other auxiliaries, mothers' meetings, girls' sewing class, band of hope meetings, week night school, prayer-meetings, Bible classes, &c., are all conducted satisfactorily. Any one wishing to come forward as a teacher will receive a cordial welcome. The school is based upon unsectarian principles, receiving no support from any church or chapel.

Addresses on the principles and work of Ragged Schools were delivered by the Chairman, Messrs. Curtis, Pearce, Woods, Barker, Dodds, and Pike. In the course of the evening the secretary announced that £5 was promised by a gentleman towards a day-school.

Papers, Original and Selected.

RAGGED SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

It was the wish of King Henry IV. of France, that "every peasant might have a fowl in his pot." Two centuries later, our King George III. expressed his desire that "every child in his dominions might be able to read the Bible." Different as they were, these were both good wishes; and their combination would realise all that the Christian philanthropist can possibly desire.

The realisation of the wish of the most popular of French kings is, however, as far off as ever; though probably it is but a prophecy of what will be the rule in the millennial age. But, happily, the wish of the British sovereign is on the eve of realisation; for if there is still a large part of our population who cannot read the holy book, it is oftener caused by the neglect of parents than through want of Schools. Thus, for example, it was shown by the investigation of the Ragged School Union in 1863, that in eleven specimen districts there were 5,499 children of school age who did not attend any School; whilst in the Ragged Schools in the same districts there was space for 4,930 more scholars.

But notwithstanding the neglect of many parents, or the wilfulness of children, every governmental inquiry has shown that there is a steady increase in the attendants at Day Schools. As a result of this spread of education, the statistics of juvenile crime show that the number of those who can neither write nor read diminishes year by year.

But, unhappily, the progress of education no more implies that it shall be used aright, than the strength of a Goliath indicates that it will be exerted for Jehovah, rather than for the idols of Philistia. In no way is this more seen than in the serials which have the largest sale in the by-ways of our great cities. To ask the vendors for a religious juvenile magazine would only be to excite a smile at our simplicity; for, say the shopkeepers, "no one ever asks for such a thing here." As in answer to any remonstrance, they say that "they must live," they pander to the tastes of their depraved customers, and so their counters are flooded with

tales which tell mere infants how *not* to keep the ten commandments. Thus highwaymen, such as Claude Duval and Tyburn Dick, and prison-breakers, like Dick Turpin and Jack Sheppard, are paraded as heroes not only to be admired but imitated. This Satanic literature is varied by sea-romances in which piracy and murder are painted in such glowing colours as to lead to admiration rather than horror. In one of these the hero, brandy-bottle in hand, sings this delectable chorus—

"Up to his neck in water,
Up to his knees in blood!"

But, as if this were not enough to corrupt youth, or to deepen the bad tendencies of fallen humanity, these serials are illustrated by sensational engravings, in which arson, murder, and prison-breaking are the prominent scenes. Like the paintings outside the shows at a country fair, these terrible pictures seem to be used as a net to catch the youthful sensational lover; nor does their Satanic craft fail. For, open-mouthed, we have seen mere children drinking in this moral poison, or club their farthings to drink a still deeper draught of a poison which is vomited from the bottomless pit. Alas! for the future of society, and the eternal future of these children.

After glancing—and it is but a glance—at literature like this, we are compelled to ask, Have we any right to wonder that juvenile crime is not extinct? Ought we not rather to wonder that, instead of youthful criminals only forming a feature in our large towns, it is not the rule? The fact alone that, with every incentive to vice and crime, so many of the poorest of the poor escape this moral contagion, we think, gives a reason why the labours of Ragged School teachers should evoke national gratitude. For were it not for the better tastes they instil, the spread of education would become a national curse, instead of what it may yet be, a national blessing. Happily, Ragged Schools are not mere secular agencies, for they place the heart before the intellect, and so regard goodness as better than greatness. Teaching as they do that this world is but the vestibule to eternity, they base all their training on Bible principles, and thus the taste for thieves' literature has no room to grow. For as a quaint writer once said, "If we fill the soul with God's corn, there will be no room for the devil's chaff." As a fruit of such religious training, how often have we seen knots of children in the Devil's Acre and Kent Street

reading those best of tracts—the narrative ones; and how still oftener have we heard them, sitting on doorsteps in groups, singing of Jesus and his blessed home. Thus they have become preachers of the gospel unawares; for often have we seen men who were sitting at their windows in their shirt sleeves put down their Sunday newspaper and eagerly listen to the songs of Zion!

Labouring as they do in the very midst of the crime-gardens of our great cities, no Ragged School teacher needs to be told of the popularity of these terrible serials. For they see them everywhere, and they too well know how many once hopeful boys and girls have been initiated into crime through their perusal.

But our friends have not been content with deploring the rage for Satanic literature, but, by the gift of good books, and the establishment of School Libraries for home reading, they have endeavoured to guide the love of reading into a proper channel. Many of these books are properly on secular topics; but, as all are based on Bible principles, a religious tone is given even to the secular. We are glad to hear from all quarters that, though religious tales are of course very attractive, natural history, travels, and biography are equally popular. Thus the imagination is not cultivated at the expense of the intellect; and the ideal does not so supplant the real as to render them unfit for the hard duties of life.

The Reports of the Ragged School Union, we are glad to intimate, show an extension of School Libraries year by year. An effort was made in 1861 (see pp. 94, 117), by means of our Magazine, to increase their number; and with much success. In answer to our appeals, both money and books were sent to Exeter Hall; and many Ragged School workers were led to see that no Sunday Ragged School could be regarded as complete which had not its Library for home reading. In the year 1862, these Libraries first formed a feature in our statistics, when 54 Ragged Schools reported that they had formed Libraries, containing an aggregate of 7,960 volumes. The Report for 1868 showed a gratifying increase in these School Libraries, for it stated that there were then 88 Libraries with 14,197 volumes.

To show the plan usually adopted for their circulation, we annex the rules of Ogle Mews Ragged School. This was one of the first Libraries instituted; and we can bear our personal testimony to the popularity of this branch of our friends' many labours for Christ.

The rules of this well-worked Library are as follows:—

1. Any boy or girl who has been in the School six weeks, and can be recommended for good conduct by his or her teacher, can have books from the Library.
2. All boys and girls who have Library books are expected to be in regular attendance.
3. All books had from the Library are to be returned weekly; but any boy or girl may, if unable to come to the School on one library night, keep the book for another week; but if not then returned, such boy or girl will forfeit the benefit of the Library for two weeks from the time of the book being brought in, except upon the special recommendation of the master or mistress.
4. Any boy or girl reported for bad conduct will not be allowed to have any books for four weeks.

An effort has just been made by the officials of the Ragged School Union to extend School Libraries to at least all our larger Schools. As one means, an application was made to the large publishers for grants of books. To this a ready response was made by the Religious Tract Society; the Christian Knowledge Society; Messrs. Griffith & Farran; Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son; Messrs. Nelson & Sons; Messrs. Seeley & Co; Mr. Macintosh, &c. These united grants will permit the establishment of 23 School Libraries, with an average of 100 volumes each. We need scarcely say, that any donations of suitable books from our readers will be gratefully received. Thus, as a final result of our united labours, we trust that every Ragged School will speedily have its Library for home reading.

And who can tell the personal or social benefits which will accrue from this movement? Ragged School Libraries will undoubtedly, as in all past cases, tend to promote regular attendance and order. They will serve not only as a protest, but as an antidote, to that thieves' literature which teaches that a life of crime is a life of romance. Replacing the bad with the good, they will have a reflex influence at home, more especially by supplanting the Sunday newspaper by works more fitted for that holy day. But, above all, in many cases they will doubtless serve to confirm and deepen religious impressions, and thus prepare our scholars for their eternal inheritance far away.

"WHY DIDN'T SOME ONE SPEAK TO HIM?"

BY THE REV. PETER STRYKER, D.D.

"PLEASE hasten to the house of Mr. M. Their oldest son has died very suddenly, and they wish to see their pastor." That message sunk into my soul like lead, for I was afraid the boy was not prepared to die, and that his parents had no grace to support them in their bitter and sudden bereavement.

In a few moments I stood beside the lifeless form of one of our Sabbath School boys. Samuel was an amiable lad. For several years he had been a regular attendant of the church and Sabbath School. He was respectful and obedient to his parents, attentive to his teacher, kind to his playmates, and deservedly a favourite with all who knew him.

But he had in life given no proof that he was a Christian, and at the early age of seventeen he had suddenly died, and left no evidence in his last moments that he had experienced the great change. The only hope was that he had heard the truth, and, unbeknown to others, he might have trusted in Jesus.

His parents, alas! were careless people, who had paid more attention to worldly matters than to religion. They had no seat in the house of God, and evinced no regard for the sanctuary and the Sabbath-day. They loved their children, but delegated the care of their spiritual and immortal interests to other people.

But now they are awake from this strange reverie. They stand aghast beside the corpse of their first-born. How can they believe he is dead? Only three days ago he was apparently as well as ever. An insidious disease laid hold of the youth, and in a delirium he died!

Yes, he is gone—gone beyond the reach of medical skill; and, what is of far greater consequence, beyond the influence of Christian love.

"Oh!" said the distracted mother, wringing her hands in the most intense agony, "Oh that I could have heard him say he died happy! Oh that some person had talked with him before his sickness, and could testify, as the result of the conversation, that my boy trusted in Christ! *Why didn't some one speak to him?*"

With thrilling effect that piercing eye met mine, and that pitiful wail of a disconsolate Rachel entered my ear. I blessed God, however derelict I had been in other instances, that heartrending complaint did not convict me. Only a short period previous to that time had I entered upon my present pastorate, and never before had I seen the boy to recognise him.

But I thought, Here is a great lesson for me and others to learn. As I turned from that chamber of death, I thought, while life is prolonged, while health is robust, while youth lingers with its sunshine and gaiety, how often the Christian neglects to speak to one over whom he might exert a powerful and beneficial influence! And all the while the precious opportunity to save that immortal being from eternal perdition is passing away! The sands of life are rapidly dropping—perhaps the last is just about to fall—but the Christian procrastinates, and soon, as he stands beside the bier, or at

the grave, the words ring in his ear and sting him with remorse—"*Too late!*"

"*Why didn't some one speak to him?*" Perhaps this inquiry convicts you of negligence, *Ragged School teacher*. You go each holy day to meet your interesting, youthful charge,—go prayerfully, go intelligently, and perhaps, to the best of your ability, explain the Scriptures. But do you eagerly seize every opportunity to speak to each dear pupil plainly and affectionately about his soul, and urge him to give his heart unto God? We cannot but think, if our Sabbath School teachers—most faithful in other duties—were more frequent in thus clinching the truth, the number of the little lambs entering the fold of the Good Shepherd would be greatly increased. And then, too, we would not find so many of our boys, when arriving at the period of adolescence, feeling themselves too big to remain in the Sabbath School.

"*Why didn't some one speak to him?*" Are your skirts clean, *pastor?* As you perform sacred services over the dead, does conscience utter no upbraidings? It is impossible for the pastor, especially in the busy city, to see every member of his flock, and point him individually to Jesus. Yet because it is an impossibility to see *all*, is there not danger that the man of God will grow careless, and act upon the principle that he cannot see or influence personally any; that all he can do is to stand in the pulpit and draw the bow at a venture; that the work of riveting truth by conversation upon the mind and heart, belong to others, not to him? And surely if he reasons thus in his mind, or acts upon this principle in his ministerial life, he is wrong. Our Saviour and his apostles came in close contact with the people, talked to them individually as well as preached to them in promiscuous crowds; and so must the ministry now, so far as possible. It is conceded that a pastor should devote his best time to study; and he who in this enlightened age is careless in his pulpit preparations, cannot expect to make much of a mark upon his generation. But cannot the servant of the Lord, by systematic arrangement of time and sagacious seizure of opportunity, without interfering with other duties, often drop a word privately in the ear which will operate as an opening wedge for the entrance of his discourses into the heart, and thus lead to conversion and to great subsequent usefulness?

"*Why didn't some one speak to him?*" O reader, whatever may be your relation to those around you—whether a pastor or a teacher—remember there is a responsibility resting upon you. You are first to seek the kingdom of God for yourself, and then you should endeavour to lead others in. And forget not the duty of personal appeal. What though it is made with a stammering tongue and a fluttering heart? If only made in faith and for God's glory, it will not be made in vain. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in caskets of silver."

ALDERSHOT FREE SCHOOL.

At the extreme south of the Government ground at Aldershot, the sandy plain slopes abruptly down towards the country. Between the fields and the massive wall which forms the boundary of the South Cavalry Barracks there lie on the side of the hill a number of houses, planted about in irregular rows. This is "West-end," one of the lowest parts of the town, where live many of the wives of the soldiers married without leave, whose existence—poor things—is for the most part one of extreme misery and degradation.

A few months since the dim visions of a possible School were finally crystallised into form, by a passing remark made one evening by the vicar of Aldershot as to the need of such a thing in West-end, the parish and National Schools being too far off for these little ones. The next morning one of the Bible-women mentioned that a public-house in the very midst of the population was vacant, and might probably be rented. A kind friend undertook negotiations with the landlord, and in the course of two days we were in possession of the keys of the Wellington Arms, on a three months' lease. A considerable sum was needed to put the premises into even temporary repair, but the situation was so admirable that we felt it was worth the outlay. The house stands at a corner where four roads meet, two other of the angles being occupied by public-houses, and the dancing-saloon behind the bar makes a capital school-room, now that paint, whitewash, and soap and water, have effaced the indescribable filthiness which seemed like an outward expression of the moral corruption of the place.

The School was opened on October 5, 1868, ten days after it was first proposed, with eight children as pupils. Their ignorance was almost incredible. Only one knew the alphabet, and several seemed never even to have heard the name of Jesus. They were so entirely unaccustomed to a moment's thought that they wearied of even the most interesting story, and we found it necessary to change the occupation about every five minutes. Some of the little boys seemed at first to be given over to a helpless stolidity; they stood, indeed, with the others, but in a state of inanition which was most perplexing. One little boy, whose grey eyes and tiniest of mouths won our hearts by their wistful expression, set all discipline at defiance by running incessantly round the room. "I don't want to go home at four o'clock," he said one day; "mammy will be drunk." Kind and gentle care have done much with him as well as with the others, and the School now consists of thirty-five children, who are making so much progress that we feel that the experiment has now passed over the boundary-mark into the region of success. We have, therefore, opened negotiations for taking the house for a term of years, and if successful in this, hope to be able also to rent a yard behind as a playground for the children.

We began with as little machinery as possible—a black-board, some alphabets, two dozen slates, and some scraps for work. Since then we have added some beautiful Scripture prints (a grant from the Religious Tract Society), and a gallery to hold fifty children. We have also ordered some desks, in the hope of beginning a Night School for boys between the ages of

twelve and sixteen. This will serve another purpose beyond the one immediately on the surface—that of supplying work for our Christian soldiers, two or three of whom have volunteered their services as a free-will offering to the Lord. As time goes on, we hope, if the funds allow, that the Wellington School" may become a centre of blessing in other ways in West-end.

HAUNTS OF CRIME.

A WELL-KNOWN member of the "Times" staff has recently devoted about a week to the visitation of the "crime gardens" of London. In company with detectives, he has visited beershops, lodging-houses for travellers, and dolly shops in Tiger Bay, Kent Street, the Mint, and the other favourite haunts of our criminal classes. From these sketches we make the following extracts, to indicate in what sort of places Ragged School teachers labour, and to show with what kind of evils they have to contend.

Against one part of "N. A. W's." statement we must, however, protest. He says that no respectable person can penetrate these dens, unprotected by he police, without being either robbed or garotted. Now we, and hundreds of our fellow-labourers, have visited these places, both day and night, not only without insult, but with positive respect. The secret was this, they knew that we did not come as spies, but, constrained by the love of Christ we came to save them and their children from present misery, and the more terrible "wrath to come." We hope, then, that no one will be deterred by these sketches, from giving their hearts and their hands to this great Gospel mission, but will tender services for which facts innumerable prove that the vilest outcast feels grateful.

"N. A. W." says that—"The low beerhouse for the worst class of thieves is generally in an ill-favoured 'slum,' ill-looking and worse smelling, with a group of tawdry women choking up its narrow entrance, and half-naked children playing about barefooted on the slimy flagstones, hiding amid the dust-heaps, from among which they only sally out when the older inhabitants of the court have come forth to look upon the phenomenon of a respectably dressed stranger venturing into their district. At the upper end of the court is a broad dim light, to which our party at once made their way, and passed through a low bar into a small taproom. Quick as we were, however, we were not quite quick enough to prevent the large party there secreting the cards with which they were practising. I use the word practising advisedly, for most of them were only occupied in attaining perfection in the three-card trick, or in ringing the endless variations on the cards with a view to future and certain profit at racecourses and country fairs. An ill-looking bull-dog, but by no means the most ill-looking of the company, came towards us as we entered, but was at once called off by its master; and then, as in the better class of thieves' house, we sat down in our corner amid a dead silence, broken only by a few muttered words of slang or an occasional spitting on the table to efface the chalk marks by which they had been practising some gambling game. When we had time to look around, we found

ourselves in a curious place and in curious society. The room was low, ill-smelling, and very full—full, too, of the lowest description of broken-down fighting men, card and skittle sharpers, and thimble-riggers. One is known over half the country fairs and racecourses in England as the very prince of successful swindlers. The others were all known rogues and vagabonds, who had been convicted as such over and over again. As with the swell thieves' beerhouse so with this infamous haunt, as soon as our party came in, its regular occupants instantly and silently departed, with the single difference that while the first-named class affected gentility in their departure, and wished us 'Good night,' the latter did not conceal their fear, but slunk away, as much as they could, unnoticed. Yet both classes were equally criminal, both were known as having lived by crime only, and as certain only to live by crime while they were at large. Yet to neither one class or the other could the detectives say a single word, for there was no specific charge against them, and they went out as usual from their beershops to prey upon society at large, whether rich or poor."

In the south and east, "N. A. W." visited twenty of these dens, some of the most infamous class, others of outward respectability; but all alike the acknowledged head-quarters of the thieves of the district.

Here is his description of the

DOLLY SHOPS.

"It is very difficult to get to see the interior of these places. Our party tried at many, but were always told 'the missus'—for these shops are mostly kept by women—was out. At last we waited outside till we saw a customer enter, to whom 'the missus' of the shop—who, in point of looks, might have been Sycorax herself—at once came out, and to her the new-comer paid two-pence, received a little paper, and left, and at the same time we entered. A ragged, emaciated child came in for 'father's jacket,' and we soon got from the little girl all that we wanted. Mother had 'left' father's jacket for sixpence that afternoon, and wanted to get it before father came home. Didn't know what mother left it for, but supposed it was for liquor. The child got the jacket for the sixpence loan on it, for which, for half a day, she paid a penny interest. The old woman could make no further denials now, and, as our detective friend insisted, she with great trepidation at last let us go over the house. It would be impossible to describe what we saw in the interior. The upper rooms were quite filled with rows of wooden racks, on which were stacked articles of wearing apparel of every kind, and 'left' for sums of every denomination from three-halfpence up to fifteen shillings. About two-thirds had evidently been worn before, but the remaining third were entirely new, such as new shoes and boots, new sailors' clothes, new comforters, crinolines, and pieces of calico prints, such as in that poor neighbourhood competing tradesmen hang outside their shops with which to tempt customers, and which certainly succeed in tempting the young thieves who filch them away and take them at once to the 'leaving-shops.' The rapidity with which the 'office'—*i.e.*, the alarm—is given from 'leaving-shop' to leaving-shop' when the police are suspected to be coming down, was, even to the detective's experience, astonishing. On our descent to the shop, after rummaging the house, we found as we expected that 'the missus' had gone

out, but in her stead was her manager, who, as we also expected, knew nothing whatever of the business in the unavoidable absence of her principal—the old beldame we had seen. Her deputy was a cheerful, healthy-looking young woman, and I only mention her here because two days afterwards we saw her in that nondescript place of business sometimes called the 'Thieves' Exchange,' sometimes 'Rag Fair,' where she sat in front of a great pile of 'leavings,' selling them really very cheap, though probably at not less than 200 or 250 per cent. profit on what they had originally been left for. After this, on this night all other attempts to enter 'leaving shops' were useless. We were coolly and very truly told we had no right to ask questions, or even to enter the house. The woman, the 'missus,' was quite derisive, and it was evident from what we heard that our first acquaintance, whose house we had been over, had been round and warned them all. Unless these 'leaving-houses' are put under the absolute control of the police, it is hopeless trying to deal with the question of how to check our criminal classes.

It must be remembered that these are not the resorts of habitual criminals, but they are what is much worse—the very nurseries and schools from which the class of habitual criminals is continually recruited. At a time when we are trying to be discriminative in our dealings with known criminals, it would be well if some questions were put as to the supply which these places afford to the demand of receivers for experienced and rising young thieves."

Another haunt of crime was visited, namely, the low "lodging houses for travellers," the Mint, Borough. They are thus photographed:—

"We passed from this haunt to the common lodging-houses, which are entirely under the superintendence of the police as to cleanliness and ventilation. They may be easily divided into three classes. First, there are those where the occupants pay fourpence a night, where none but respectable artisans are admitted, and where a thief or a bad woman would have as much chance of being received as at the Clarendon or Mivart's. These are literally the hotels of honest working men, and it is not too much to say that the introduction of a bad character, whether male or female, would go a great way towards emptying the lodging-house. Some of the occupants have been there for more than twenty years, and these, or indeed any who occupy their beds a week, are charged nothing for Sundays.

This good, cheap lodging house, however, is a very exceptional case. Only a few yards further from it we came upon one which is a notorious resort for the most notorious thieves of the East-end. The price of a night's lodging here is only a penny less than that for which really comfortable beds can be got a few hundred yards or so further on. But the class is quite different—as distinct as black and white. They were a sort of begging thieves, male and female, about as numerous a class of depredators as any that exist in London; there was no trace of the water pirate, the swell mobsman, the card sharper, or the burglar, here. They were all what I may call well-dressed mendicants—that is to say, well-dressed mendicants for the parts they had to play. Ostensibly they gained their living by begging. In reality, they were, as the occasion offered, either prostitutes or thieves. They were all assembled in a low cavernous-looking cellar underground, seated round a huge fire cooking their food, talking and laughing. There were flower girls, cigar-light girls, street tumblers, *professional* blind men, roughs of the lowest

description, and ragged girls—children, I should have said, who lived infamous lives among the bargemen on the river side. One thing that struck me more than anything else was the utter absence of concealment among either the men or women as to who or what they were."

EDINBURGH INDUSTRIAL BRIGADE.

FROM "The Arbroath Guide" we extract the following account of the Industrial Brigade, which was established in Edinburgh in the winter of 1867:—

"This institution had its origin in the praiseworthy desire, on the part of several Christian gentlemen, to relieve the chief thoroughfares of Edinburgh of a nuisance, and at the same time to rescue from a life of vice and crime a class of boys known not less distinctively than truthfully as 'city Arabs.' The results of their first year's experiment cannot be otherwise than gratifying to the philanthropic promoters of the scheme. Judged merely by the money which has been raised to promote the object they had in view in starting on their enterprise, the operations of the directors may not appear to be very extensive; but the practical good which has been accomplished may be readily comprehended from the simple statement that in twelve months, and at very trifling expense, thirty boys have been taken from the streets, and from idleness, if not worse, and put to trades, at which they have an opportunity of becoming industrious and respectable citizens.

The conception of the idea of an Industrial Brigade for Edinburgh—we believe there has been a kindred institution in Glasgow for some years—appears to be due to Mr. David Harris, of that city; and in order to give it practical embodiment, he solicited and secured the co-operation of others friendly to the design, among whom were Sheriff Watson, late of Aberdeen, and Dr. William Robertson, of Edinburgh, who are widely known for their long and earnest labours in connection with Ragged Schools.

Such an institution as this Industrial Brigade no doubt trenches very closely on the ground already occupied by Ragged Schools; but the fact that veteran advocates of these latter are among the founders and friends of the former, furnishes some assurance that there is little likelihood of any conflict arising with regard to the peculiar sphere now occupied by the new society. It is true that while the main feature of Ragged Schools is educational, some of them at least partake of an industrial character; but it is obvious that the latter feature of these institutions must necessarily be of a very circumscribed nature, and not at all adequate to the number of young people attending the schools. It will probably be found that in most, if not in all Ragged Schools, industrial occupations are represented merely by tailoring and shoemaking. Ragged Schools, also, are intended chiefly for children of a more tender age than, it is presumed, are to be found in the Home of the Industrial Brigade. Then, again, when boys leave the Ragged School to begin apprenticeships, some of them are not unlikely, from the absence of proper supervision and discipline, to lapse into previous bad habits. There

is, it is understood, some oversight usually taken of these lads when they quit School; but if they have not good homes, that oversight on the part of the School managers or teachers must be more or less of a loose description. From the nature of the case, it cannot be otherwise; and the consequence probably is, that a large percentage of these children, from the evil associations into which they subsequently fall, are ultimately lost to virtue and gained to vice. And it is just at this point that organisations such as that now under notice appear to come in as the 'missing link' in that chain of charity towards the destitute and degraded youth of our large towns and cities, which should be a more prominent feature than it yet is in the 'good works' of Christian men and Christian churches.

It occurs to us, however, that there may occasionally arise a difficulty in working out the idea which has received embodiment in this Edinburgh Industrial Brigade. In the case of orphans, the society may properly enough place itself *in loco parentis* to them; but what is to be done when the boy to be reclaimed or introduced to good and steady habits is not an orphan? Neither the rights nor the duties of parents are to be lightly interfered with; to interfere with these would tend, not to heal a wound, but to introduce another discordant element into society. Even where the parents of a lad are by no means reputable, and however desirable it may be that he should live, at least in some measure, in a state of separation from them, the intervention of any institution is a matter of great difficulty as well as delicacy. We have seen this stated as a mere matter of detail but it is a matter of detail requiring the exercise of particularly sound judgment.

The Directors of the Industrial Brigade state, that 'when operations were commenced twelve months ago as a mere temporary expedient to provide the boys with work, as a means of paying for their food and lodging, they were engaged as shoeblacks.' The particular employment here indicated had long been prosecuted by a certain class of boys in the neighbourhood of such thoroughfares as the railway-stations; but their habits and their appearance proved a nuisance which the magistrates of the city were frequently urged to put down. This was the raw material on which the association directed its energies. The boys were provided with a uniform in which they were to pursue their humble avocation, and the care as well as the discipline to which they were subjected in their Home rendered them in some sense a band of useful public servants. But, though this was a beginning, it was merely a beginning. The lads could not possibly remain shoeblacks very long; they must either have more regular employment found for them, or they will inevitably lapse into that association with the criminal and vicious classes, from which an attempt had been made to snatch them. Indeed, it does not appear that shoeblacking can be a very suitable employment to put a boy to if the intention is to afterwards make him a steady and industrious workman. One would imagine that a curriculum on the streets would find its more natural termination in an idle, useless, if not more positively bad life. The correctives furnished by effective control, however, may prevent such a consequence, and in the present instance such seems to have been the case. We are informed that, 'as a boy evinced a desire to improve, a suitable situation at some regular employment was provided for

him'; and the result is, that out of the thirty boys at present in the Home of the Brigade, only two are now engaged in the menial occupation of shoe-blacking, all the others having been apprenticed to trades at which they may through life earn an honest livelihood.

The financial side of any scheme of benevolence is always a matter of some importance, and that of the Edinburgh Industrial Brigade may be briefly glanced at. The report by the directors states, on this point:—

'The total earnings of the boys amounted to £189 13s. 10d., sufficient to pay the cost of the food and the rent of the premises, and thus the expectations of the directors have been, in this respect, fully realised; but it will always be found in enterprises of this kind, the benevolence of friends must supply clothing and superintendency for the boys. The item of clothing is a most expensive one, though every care has been taken to keep this outlay as moderate as possible. Through the kindness of Admiral Ramsay, your society have had nothing to pay for the making of the suits, which has been a most important help in enabling the directors to provide clothing for the boys. The Home is at present very full, and it is the intention of the directors, should they be supported by the public with the necessary means, at Whit-Sunday next, to double their sphere of operations. By doing this, the superintendent, with a junior assistant at a small cost, would be able to manage and instruct twice the number of boys, thus reducing the cost per head materially.'

It may be noticed that the sum subscribed by the friends of the institution was a little over £270. Out of this was defrayed the superintendent's salary and servants' wages (£75 17s. 3d.), the expenses connected with fitting up and furnishing the Home (about £77), clothing for the boys (£87 2s.), and various other necessary and incidental expenses. A considerable portion of the outlay, of course, has been incident to the opening of the Home, and will not fall to be incurred in future years—such as that for furniture; while, if the Directors see their way to double their sphere of operations in the course of the current year, the general expenses of management will not involve a very great increase.

It is worthy of observation, also, that the good work performed by this interesting charity during the past year is not summed up in the reclamation of the thirty boys noticed above. It appears from the statement issued by the Directors, that 'the total number of boys that have been assisted amounts to 136, for periods varying from two days to the whole time the Brigade has been in existence.' From this it is to be inferred that no difficulty will be experienced in greatly extending the Brigade's beneficent operations, provided that sufficient means for doing so are placed at the disposal of the Directors. Looking to the object for which public assistance is requested, there can be little doubt that, notwithstanding the plethora of charitable institutions brought under one's notice now-a-days, the means solicited will be forthcoming. The good accomplished by the Edinburgh Industrial Brigade is an *immediate* good: the youths who have been brought within the influence of the institution were a year ago a burden and a nuisance to the city; they are now in a large measure supporting themselves at honest callings. The scheme is worthy of commendation also in respect of what appears to be its judicious and economical management. Indeed,

what strikes one most in connection with the matter, is the large amount of sterling work effected at a comparatively insignificant outlay of money; and we imagine this fact must be still more telling in Edinburgh—a city proverbial for the number of its richly endowed hospitals for the young, though it may well be questioned whether, with all their wealth, a correspondingly satisfactory balance-sheet can be shown.

THE THREE GIRLS OF BETHNAL GREEN.

I WANT to tell you about three dear girls, each showing, in her separate way, what a change comes over the life and conduct when loving Christian influence is brought to bear upon a child, and the heart is opened to the love of Jesus. The name of the first is Nellie M——, called "Black Nell" when she was first brought in, from her extra dirty condition, but now she is much improved in appearance, and even has some pride as to the condition of her garments. We visited Nellie at her miserable home. She, and her little sister and brother, had been deserted by their mother; and her father, an umbrella-mender, was "fond of the drink." Nellie told us that she had been in the habit, when she could get a penny, of going to the "penny gaff" (theatre), and how that, to get a penny, she often "slipped away" pieces of the umbrellas, etc., which her father left about, and sold them (he took her *earnings*); but she had never done it since "that night"—alluding to a tea-meeting a month before, when most of the two hundred children were suddenly melted into tears at the thought of their sins, and since which time a great change has been noticed in many of them. So observable is this change in Nellie, that a little girl—who came to Miss Macpherson after School one evening, saying, with tears in her eyes, "Oh, miss, I am afraid *I* don't love Jesus!"—remarked, "There's Nellie M——, she's been a different girl since *that evening*. She won't do things now she did before." Before I left London, Nellie and her little sister had been received into training-homes, and I hope will turn out useful members of society.

Another little girl, in whom I was much interested, and who seemed about ten years old, was Mary Anne G——, who guided me one evening to the little chapel in Bethnal Green. With an openness, perhaps more like Irish than Scotch children, she told me all her story in five minutes. She said she knew how to make boxes, but her mother went out to work, so she stayed at home to mind the children, and make little shirts and pinafores for them, and clean the house, to make it comfortable for mother when she came home. She said her little brother and sister were ill with typhus fever; "but I shan't take it; I've got camphor down my bosom. My little sister is to go instead of me to the next tea-meeting if she's able. Oh, I *do* hope she may be able. My little sister's name is Florence, and I've got a *little baby* six months old. I clean the house when she's asleep. Mother's so kind, she would do anything for me." When I asked for "father," she said, "Oh, father gets tipsy, and makes mother and me so unhappy about him." I asked the dear child if she loved her Saviour, and prayed that her father might be

turned from the love of the drink. She said, "Oh yes, I love Jesus, and mother loves him; and we should be so happy if father did not get tipsy, but we pray for him *every evening*." I saw Mary Anne again at the match-boxmakers' Sabbath School. She was nursing her little brother, but the little sister was still very ill.

A little girl, named Charlotte W——, also interested me much. She seemed about thirteen years old, but had the staidness and sense of a grown woman. Some time since her mother fell rather behind with her rent; the landlord sold their bed, and Charlotte, with her mother and two younger sisters, had to take refuge for a week in Bethnal Green workhouse. When they came out, they were three days before they got into a house, and they slept under sheds and railway arches. One evening they got into a small outhouse, but were quite without food. At last Charlotte said, "Oh, mother, Miss Macpherson told us at the School that we should pray to God for what we need, and he will give it us." So they knelt in the dark—it was about eleven at night—and prayed that God would send them food. Almost immediately a plate of "broken victuals" was thrust under the door, by some one who had seen the poor woman and her children go up the court to the outhouse. Charlotte said, "Now, mother, didn't I tell you that God would send it?" When we visited them they were in a very small room—the three girls at a bench under the window making boxes, the bed coiled up in one corner of the floor. I do not know that any furniture was in the room, and the floor was so covered with bulky piles of made boxes, that we had great difficulty in finding standing room without crushing some. Charlotte could make 2s. 4½d. per week by her boxes, and her sisters 1s. 6d. each; and by their labour they maintained themselves and their poor mother, who was in very ill health, spitting blood, and not likely to live long. With the mother and Charlotte Miss Macpherson talked over the family circumstances, offering to remove them into a more comfortable room, and promising the poor mother to take charge of her girls when she was gone. Then she offered up a prayer, standing (for there was no room to kneel), for the poor sick mother and her children; but the girls knelt at their work-bench, and Charlotte gave thanks for the way opened up "for dear mother." I could not *hear all* she said, for she spoke low, but all her prayer seemed to be about "dear mother." Two days after, one of Miss Macpherson's sister-helpers took the poor mother a gown, when Charlotte knelt down and said, "O Lord, Thou knew we asked for a gown for dear mother last evening, and now, *Thou hast sent it!*"

Since then a dear lady and her family have taken up this once sorrowful group, and they are freed from the burden of rent for a season. A bed and bedstead and a few articles of furniture are placed for their use. Clothed, too, warmly, the mother is better. They are now regularly in the schools and place of worship, and their gratitude to this kind, unknown family is very touching. This poor mother is one that love has shown a better way, than by drinking and low evil example.—*The Revival.*

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

Special Prayer Meetings.

A MINISTER of Christ once noticed a poor stone-breaker hard at work. He was kneeling so as to reach the stones more readily. The man of God said, "Ah, John, I wish I could break the stony hearts of my hearers as easily as you break those stones."

The stone-breaker at once replied, "Perhaps, Sir, you do not work as I do—on your *knees*."

We are glad to believe that the bulk of Ragged School teachers do not need this reproof, but that they work on their knees. And this is, probably, one of the reasons why their labours have been so blessed; for the promise is not so much to work, as to prayer—"*ask*, and ye shall receive" Thus, in addition to that specific, closet prayer, without which Christian work is presumptive, no less than 120 Ragged Schools conclude their Sunday work with that earnest prayer which shows that they know that the Holy Ghost alone can lead their classes to Jesus. Some indeed devote one week night to that purpose; and in such cases, conversion-work can be generally traced to their earnest pleadings. For the "Kingdom of Heaven" still "suffereth violence, and the violent men taketh it by force"—even by the storm of prayer.

From the first, the Ragged School Union have requested a Special Prayer Meeting to be held in every Ragged School on the Sunday preceding their Annual Meeting—and this request has ever met with a ready response. In conformity, then, with this good old custom, we have to request that every Ragged School will hold a Special Prayer Meeting, on Sunday, May 9th, the day preceding our Annual Meeting.

This Prayer Union, more than any other, tells the unity of our co-workers; showing as it does that, whilst they steadily labour in their own appointed sphere, they do not forget that they are but units in a great army. As our Annual Meeting, too, gives *tone* to the year's work, much depends upon the speakers, whether we shall work, not for man's praise, but solely for Jesus. Nor must it be forgotten that, as the Central Society takes the general oversight of the movement, its Committee and Officers feel that they need so much of the wisdom from above, that they are constrained to echo the apostolic petition, "Brethren, pray for us."

May then the dew of the Spirit fall upon those who take part in these Special Prayer Meetings of the 9th of May; and then we doubt not that in answer to their united pleadings, we shall be strengthened for our labours, and that many old and young will be led to exclaim—"Sirs, we would see Jesus."

"I AM OF NO USE."

"Why do I live?" has been asked by thousands of Christians. "I am poor, without influence, friendless, and deserted; my name unknown. I am useless in the world and the church of God. Why do I live?"

A young female lived in a humble cot. Her simple wardrobe and her Bible were her all on earth. The world, with riches and joys, was around her, but knew her not. The hectic flush and wasting strength gave sad evidence of her speedy departure to another world. She died; but her record of God's love, of the truth of the Christian religion, of its sustaining power in death, of the hope it gives of a glorious immortality, were seeds which have been wafted to many lands, and hundreds have been converted to God through the instrumentality of the "Dairyman's Daughter."

Another, old, and confined to her bed for years, laid hold on the promises of God in prayer; a work of grace commenced, and many were born to God; many became ministers of the Gospel; others active workers in the vineyard of Christ, and their numbers are increasing with every generation.

Another dedicated her son to God, and was blessed. Another sent to a neighbour a tract, which was the means of turning many from their sins. Another established a prayer-meeting, with glorious results. Another, with a warm heart, told of God's love; and the zeal spread from heart to heart, and neighbourhood to neighbourhood, until hundreds rejoiced in God.

The history of the church is full of instances and evidences that God can and will use all his people for his glory. The field is so broad, all can work, whatever be their condition, however humble their circumstances. Sow what seed you can; if you have but a handful or a grain, sow it; if you have a bushel, or a thousand bushels, sow all. You may never see the harvest, or gather the sheaves; but surely you may and will rejoice with the reaper, when the grain is brought home.

Poet's Corner.

THE BEST THAT I CAN.

"I CANNOT do much," said a little star,
"To make the dark world bright;
My silvery beams cannot struggle far
Through the folding gloom of night;
But I'm only part of God's great plan,
And I'll cheerfully do the best that I can!"

"What is the use," said a fleecy cloud,
"Of these few drops that I hold?
They will hardly bend the lily proud,
Though caught in her cup of gold!
Yet I am a part of God's great plan,
So my treasures I'll give as well as I can."

A child went merrily forth to play;
But a thought, like a silver thread,
Kept winding in and out all day
Through the happy golden head:
"Mother said, 'Darling, do all you can,
For you are a part of God's great plan!'"

She knew no more than the glancing star,
Nor the cloud, with its chalice full,
How, why, and for what, all strange things were
She was only a child at school!
But thought, "It is part of God's great plan
That even I should do all that I can!"

So she helped a younger child along,
When the road was rough to the feet;
And she sang from her heart a little song,
That we all thought passing sweet;
And her father, a weary, toil-worn man,
Said, "I too will do the best that I can."

Our best! Ah! Christian, the best of us
Must hide our faces away,
When the Lord of the vineyard comes to look
At our task, at the close of day.
But for strength from above—'tis the Master's plan—
We'll pray, and we'll do the best that we can!

Children's Gallery.

THE FLOWER OF THE COURT.

Never was the truth that "in the midst of life we are in death" more illustrated than in the case of Thomas Mitchell. He was the son of poor but respectable persons who were most anxious about the morals of their children. He attended the Ragged School in Queen's Square, Westminster, and as a paid monitor he was remarkable for his kindness to and his patience with his class, and for the faithfulness with which he performed his duties. But better still than this, he never was so happy as when he was speaking to his companions of the love of Jesus.

His kind missionary schoolmaster gives this photograph of Thomas Mitchell. He says, "Conceive a good-natured, obliging, meek-tempered boy, in whose intelligent eye you might read his mind, and whose amiable smile while receiving your advice spoke of the guilelessness of his character, and you have his portrait completely."

From this Ragged School he went to a situation; and there kept up the good character he had won at school. On the 16th of March last, he received the prize of the Ragged School Union from the hands of Lord Shaftesbury, and none looked more healthy and cheerful. Little did he think as he gleefully passed the platform that the money then awarded as a prize, would help towards paying the expenses of his funeral. Yet on the 24th of the same month—only eight

short days after—struck down by scarlet fever, he was lying a corpse.

But *where* is he? is now the great question. His love of Jesus, and his life, lead us to believe that he had given his heart to Christ. Every one, indeed, seemed to feel that though young in years he was ripening for God's garner in glory. Thus, when his teacher called to see him, he was met by a poor sinful woman who said, "*The flower of the court* is dead!"

Dear young reader! would this be your epitaph, were you called as suddenly to die? Oh, give your heart to Jesus like Thomas Mitchell in early youth. Then, if you are called to die as early as he, it will be said of you, not that the flower of the flock is dead, but that it has been transplanted to God's Paradise, there to bloom for ever!

ARE YOU DOING ANY GOOD?

Miss Agnes Moore was a Sunday School teacher. She loved every scholar in her class, and sought to lead them to Jesus. One Sabbath she said, "Boys, I want each one of you to ask himself the question, 'What good can I do?'"

"We are too young and small," said one of the boys. "We can't buy coal and wood for poor people, as papa does. We have no pies and cakes as mamma has, to give away."

"I know that, my dear; you are not expected to do the work of men and women, only that of little boys. There is something, however, which you can do, and do better than your papa or mamma or any other person, simply because it is *your* work."

"What is it that we can do?" asked the boys.

"Think of my question, 'What good can I do?' every day this week. Next Sunday I will ask you if you have not found something to do."

On the next Sunday the boys were all present. "I will begin with you, Henry. What have you found to do?"

"I have been to poor old Susan's to take clothes to her to keep her warm, and some nice things for her to eat."

"I went to see old Susan, too," said Robert, "but mother had nothing to send her. I read a chapter in the Bible to her, and she liked it very much. I am going to do so every week, for it makes her very happy."

"I split wood," said Willie, "and father paid me sixpence. Here it is to put into the missionary box."

"I have brought two boys I found playing in the street to Sunday School," said Robert.

"I am very much pleased with you all, dear children. You have all done well. I hope that you will not be satisfied with doing good *this* week, but will go on *each day of your lives* trying to do all that you can."

Are there not *many* children who might do *as much*, if not *more*, than these boys did? Are there not many *grown people* who are not trying to do good?

Will not all, then, both old and young, begin now to ask the question, "What good can I do?" and seek in earnest to find an answer?

Teachers' Column.

HOW ONE TALENT BECAME TEN.

At a recent convention of Sunday School workers in New York, the Rev. F. H. Marling, of Toronto, Canada, mentioned the following fact for the encouragement of young and diffident Christians:—

"Some five or six years ago, a young man came into our Sabbath School who

wanted a class badly. The superintendent thought that he would not be able to manage a class, and it certainly seemed unlikely, for there was a look of deficiency in his countenance, betokening mental weakness. The superintendent finally gave him something to do, using him here and there to fill up gaps made by *absent* teachers.

To-day, that young man is teaching a Mission School on the morning of the Lord's-day. On his way thither he stops at the barracks to distribute tracts and say a word or two to the soldiers. In the afternoon he teaches another Mission School, and in the evening holds meetings for the children of the school and their parents. On Monday night he attends a regular meeting for prayer, held by the Young Men's Christian Association. On Tuesday night he meets with the Association, of which he is an active member. On Wednesday night he is at another prayer-meeting; Thursday night a church prayer-meeting, and on Friday night still another prayer-meeting. The speaker had been with him in some of these services. He conducts them well—as well as a great many ministers would do it.

What is the secret of it? He had scarcely one talent even, only a half-talent in our estimation. But God was using through him one of the 'weak things,' to confound the things that are mighty. *His whole heart was in his work.* He kept a note-book, and set down facts and thoughts that struck him as being such as he could use. He loved Jesus. He loved souls. He would not let anything discourage him. He was a brave, noble, patient, persistent worker, albeit not endowed with as much brains as most of us may have, for the Master's work.

Now, are any teachers in the Sabbath School beginning to be discouraged, to feel that they are weak, that they cannot "talk in meeting," and that they are not qualified to do much for Christ? Let me remind them of my friend John, this "deficient" young man, and assure them if they only love Jesus, and are in earnest, and make him their friend and [helper, they may be useful. To such he would say, 'Stick to it,' 'Go on,' and your half-talent even, or quarter-talent, will grow to be 'one' or 'five' or 'ten.'"

ORNAMENTAL TEACHERS.

By a quiet yet searching eye the ornamental teacher may quickly be detected. From the character of Sunday School labour one would suppose the species uncommon; but this is not the case. Happily the atmosphere of the Ragged School is ill suited to his constitution, and the specimens are not of the higher "strain"; but we *have* met with them, especially about this season of the year.

Passing from generals to particulars, we select G. A. as a good average specimen. He graduated as a scholar and junior teacher in an ordinary Sunday School; thence he passed to a Ragged School. He was faultless in dress, possessed an average intellect, and was not undevout; but he was very irregular in attendance, and rarely sung with his class the opening hymn. Speaking charitably, he was only a lukewarm Christian, and therefore deemed it no sin to whisper during an address to other teachers. He rarely missed a "treat," because it was a time for display, and we can repicture him readily "assisting" the ladies in his fancy gloves. His last appearance in this character became the turning-point of his life. The "treat" consisted of a jaunt to the forest, and G. A. professed to have spent a very pleasant day.

Another ornamental teacher of the opposite sex who was also present had lately "patronised" the school. The bonds of duty sitting lightly upon each, and being much drawn together, they found it more congenial to walk together than to restrain the exuberant spirits of ill cultivated poor boys and girls; and they enjoyed themselves accordingly.

From the "treat" of the following

year they were absent, as they were spending the honeymoon at the seaside. The "ornamentals" have long since left the school, the *couleur de rose* has faded, and they are as ordinary mortals who have made a wrong step in life.

The school is quite forgotten, the chapel rarely visited, and he must be a rarely-gifted preacher indeed who could touch with a living coal the hearts of such ornamental Christians.

F.

Editor's Note-book.

YET!

"I WILL yet for this be inquired of" (Ezek. xxxvi. 37). Yet be inquired of—though His goodness has been so long abused by our sins! Yet—though He has promised to bless! For it is a characteristic of God's dealings with his people, that what he promises to do *for* them he will be, and is to be, inquired of *by* them to do it for them. He connects means with ends, the prayers of his people with the blessings he confers upon them. After making "exceeding great and precious promises" to his church, he adds, "Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock."

There is a deep lesson to be learned from this "yet." It is a little word, but it implies much. It teaches us the connection of means and ends; so, if we would have a blessing, we must not be idle, but work; if we would receive, we must ask: if we would have an outpouring of the Spirit and a revival of God's work we must pray. "Ask, and ye *shall* receive."

WHO CAN VALUE THE SOUL?

WHEN we endeavour to estimate the worth of an immortal soul, we are utterly lost in the attempt.

The art of spiritual computation is not governed by the same principles and rules which guide our speculations concerning earthly objects. The value of gold, silver, merchandise, food, raiment, land, and houses, is easily regulated by custom, convenience, and necessity. Even the more capricious and imaginary worth of pictures, medals, or statues, may be reduced to systematic rule. Crowns and sceptres have had their adjudged valuation, and kingdoms have been bought and sold for sums of money.

But who can fix the adequate price of a human soul? "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" The principles of ordinary arithmetic all fail here; and we are constrained to say that He alone who paid the ransom for sinners, and made the souls of men his purchased possession, can comprehend and solve the arduous question. They are indeed bought with a price, but are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.

We shall only ascertain the value of a soul when we shall be able to estimate the worth of a Saviour.—*Legh Richmond.*

THE NIGHT COMETH.

SOME years ago a missionary in a pagan land brought before his people a benevolent object, for which he proposed to receive their contributions at some future time. A maimed and crippled man

pressed forward at once, and, laying down a handful of silver, said, "That is for myself; and *that*," laying down another, "is for my wife; and *that*," laying down still another, "is for my child."

"But," said the missionary, "I do not want the contributions *now*, but only to know how much you think you can give when the time shall come for collecting it." "Ah! sir," replied the man, with deep earnestness, "God's work must be done, and I may be dead." And he refused to take back the contribution, saying, "No, no; I cannot take it back; for God's work must be done, and I may be dead."

This was true wisdom in the poor African, wisdom requisite not only in giving, but in all our Christian labours. "God's work must be done, and I may be dead." Therefore I will now give and do all I can for His cause and kingdom. For "the night cometh;" and work not done for Christ on earth cannot be done in heaven.

Correspondence.

DESTITUTE CHILDREN'S DINNER SOCIETY.

To the Editor of the Sunday School Union-Magazine.

SIR,—On behalf of the Committee of the Destitute Children's Dinner Society, we beg the favour of your allowing us to state in your columns that the funds which have been entrusted to us have been most beneficially expended in the support of forty-one dining-rooms in the most destitute localities of the metropolis, where about 80,000 dinners have been given since the 1st of October last. We have received from the various ladies and gentlemen who superintend these rooms the strongest testimony to the necessitous condition of the children, and to the advantages they have derived from the seasonable aid thus supplied to them. Not only is there a marked improvement in their physical condition, but their teachers affirm that they are now enabled to exert their mental powers in a degree which was formerly impossible.

The prevailing distress is but very little diminished, yet our funds are so far exhausted that without an immediate addition to our finances we must altogether withhold further assistance from the forty-one impoverished districts above-mentioned. We therefore earnestly appeal to the sympathy and bounty of the benevolent to afford us the means of continuing this relief for a short time longer to the poor children attending ragged and other schools in London.

Subscriptions will be thankfully received by the treasurer, the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, M.P., 1, Pall Mall East, and William Fuller, Esq., 111, Piccadilly; or may be paid to their account with Messrs. Ransom and Co., 1, Pall Mall East.

We are, &c.,

SHAFTESBURY, EBURY, W. COWPER, A. KINNAIRD,
A. P. STANLEY, WM. CONWAY, WM. FULLER.
G. G. COOPER GARDINER, *Secretary*.

25, Grosvenor Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.

[Having watched the dinner movement from the time when it commenced, in New Tothill Street Ragged School, we gladly attest the value of a society which sprang out of that experiment. That one good *meat* dinner per week should have a marked physical effect on our scholars was somewhat startling; but we have noticed this gradual improvement—we might almost say, that we have seen *flesh grow*. We think, then, that this society has every claim on the Christian philanthropist; for not only has it strengthened many a listless frame, but it has copied the example of our Divine Master, who said, "I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint by the way."—ED.]

Notices of Meetings.

COTTAGE PLACE.

ON April 9th there was an interesting meeting of the members of the Band of Hope connected with this Ragged School. It now numbers 113 members. R. S. Dixon, Esq., the Treasurer, presided.

The special object of this meeting was to present Mr. J. A. Lewis, who has been Secretary of this School for twenty years, with a small token of the children's gratitude for his many efforts for their social and spiritual welfare. By request of the scholars, Mr. E. J. Hytche gave him the somewhat unique present, which they had subscribed for in farthings and pence. It consisted of a beautiful stuffed foreign bird, equally beautifully mounted.

The happy gathering was addressed by Rev. G. M. Murphy, and Messrs. Cox, Cobalt, and Lay.

DRUID STREET.

RECENTLY the annual meeting of the above School was held, at which the Earl of Shaftesbury presided.

The Report was read by Mr. Penny, the Secretary, who is also one of the Superintendents, and it showed that at the commencement of the year, there was a balance due to the Treasurer of £5 0s. 11d.; the receipts had been £143 9s. 11d., which left a balance due to the Treasurer of 2s. 4d. only. In the Day School there were 284 children, being an increase on any previous year; 20 girls have been sent to service, and 33 boys to situations. In the Sunday Evening School there are 204 children, increase 24; and on Sunday afternoon 211, increase 42. The Mothers' Meeting has above one hundred names on the register, and is well attended. The number of teachers is not sufficient, more especially on Sunday nights, when children often have to be sent away for lack of teachers.

The Earl of Shaftesbury said that he had known Bermondsey in past years, and was pleased they had made such progress. He quite agreed with Mr. Tugwell, as to the benefit London had received from Ragged Schools; without them he thought it would be uninhabitable; no police or military force would have been sufficient to keep the peace. The greatest difficulty they had was want of funds; if they had more money they could take many more children into the school. The noble Earl then gave some anecdotes of persons who had risen to positions of eminence from Ragged Schools, and who were not ashamed of their origin. The want of teachers, which the Report had spoken of, was very

lamentable, and he hoped that when he again occupied that chair as their President, he would find they had too many instead of too few. He did not think government supervision desirable. If they had government aid, they would have them interfering with the teaching, and it would lose its simple evangelical character, and he believed under any other system they would lose half their children. The only way in which government aid would be beneficial, was by grants for industrial objects.

The meeting was addressed by Revs. W. Jones, R. M. Martin, L. Tugwell; Messrs. Bevington, Cox, and Hone.

WINDSOR.

THE annual meeting of the supporters of the Windsor and Eton Ragged Schools was held on March 24, in the Town-hall. The Mayor (T. Chamberlain, Esq.) presided.

Mr. Geary, the Secretary, read the following Report:—During the past year, in the Windsor School, on Sunday afternoons, the average attendance of boys and girls was about 40. In the previous year the attendance was about 100. This falling off is to be attributed, in a great measure, to lack of teachers. The number of teachers is five. In the previous year the number was ten. Your committee, therefore, earnestly appeal to their friends to come forward and assist them at once in this work of faith and labour of love:

In January, 1867, your committee established a Free Day School and secured the services of a most efficient teacher, the present mistress, Miss Alice Phipps, who was recommended by the Ragged School Union. The average attendance of scholars is 50; the number on the books 69. The attendance would have been much larger, but for the erection of a school exactly opposite, conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, who hold out advantages in a temporal point of view with which your committee cannot compete. The number of scholars who have passed through the books is 359. Special attention is given to instruction in needlework among the girls, and 20 of them have been taught sewing. Two girls have been sent to situations, one of whom has gained a prize given by the Ragged School Union, for having kept her first situation for twelve months, and during that time given satisfaction. Two girls obtained prizes at the meeting of the Prince Consort's Windsor Royal Association, in the Home Park, last summer, for needlework.

A Mothers' Meeting is held every Monday evening, from 6 to 8 o'clock, for the purpose of assisting the mothers of the scholars in obtaining materials at a reasonable price, and in making and mending garments. The average attendance is ten. The attendance has been much affected by the school above referred to, and needs the support and interest of the subscribers. An interesting and instructive book is read to the mothers while at work, and afterwards a short address is given, drawing their attention to the word of God and how to make their homes happy.

A Sunday Evening Service is held for elder scholars, and about 50 are in attendance every Sunday, and while seated in the comfortable school-room they have been attracted by the teachings from the holy volume, instead of running about the streets and getting into evil company.

In the Eton School, Mill Lane, the average attendance of scholars on the Sunday morning is 20, and in the afternoon 40. There are five teachers, and their average attendance is three. There is a Lending Library of forty volumes. A Bible Class for Senior Scholars is held, at which ten scholars attend. There is also a Teachers' and Elder Scholars' Prayer Meeting; but the attendance is small. A Sunday Evening Service is held, and the average attendance is 20.

The interests of this School were earnestly pleaded by Rev. S. Eastman, T. G. Swindell, Mr. J. G. Gent, Messrs. Atkin, Caley, and Harris.

Papers, Original and Selected.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO: THEN AND NOW.

It is now twenty-five years ago since the Ragged School Union started on its mission of mercy. Probably some of its founders, in the first flush of success, expected more than was ultimately accomplished; yet a review of the field of labour, and of the difficulties on the right hand on and the left, can only lead to gratitude to God that so much has been effected for the social and spiritual reclamation of our wild tribes. Others, however, either laughed at the project, or predicted a signal failure. But they little knew what victories faith can achieve; and as *they* think of the then and the now, we doubt not that long before this, like Nehemiah's enemies (Nehemiah vi. 16), "they have perceived that this work was wrought of our God."

To learn how rich our mission has been in social and spiritual results, we have only to review the past twenty-five years, and we shall see how much Christian zeal has done for our social waifs and strays. To those, indeed, who have watched Ragged Schools from the outset, no feature is more striking than this—how growth has led to further growth; and hence how one plan has contained the seeds of further aggressive machinery. Thus the success of plans at first only tentative has suggested further machinery, till at length the whole ground is occupied with schemes to socialise and save the outcast or destitute classes.

For example, twenty-five years ago there were only twenty institutions for the religious training of the lapsed classes; or, in other words, the Pagans of London. Some were called "Schools for the Destitute," and some "Free Schools." A few had received the time-honoured name of "Ragged School," or that by which all such Schools are known. These were mostly merely Sunday Schools; though one or two were opened once or twice on week evenings for secular instruction. They were, too, usually held in small, ill-ventilated, and not over clean rooms; and thus most were illustrations of "teaching under difficulties." But happily now—after twenty-five years' hard work—there are in London and its adjacent

towns no less than 191 such institutions, mostly with properly constructed, well lighted and ventilated buildings.

Again, twenty-five years ago no Ragged School was opened as a *Day* School. It followed, then, that the earnest pioneers had only a few hours of one day in the week to cope with the home-training, and the still worse street-education, of the other six days. Still, some were saved; and the way was pointed out how to polish and shape the rough pebbles into objects of usefulness or beauty. Out of this success sprang the properly organised Day School. Year by year this plan has become so developed, that there are now 182 Day Schools, with no less than 33,260 on the books, and an average *daily* attendance of 24,050. The few Night Schools have also so increased year by year, that now we have entered the twenty-sixth year of our history, 207 Night Schools perfect the day work, or catch those stragglers who had escaped the Christian oversight of our Day Schools.

Need we say that twenty-five years ago there were no Penny Banks? It is true that there were flourishing Savings' Banks, but the bulk of the depositors were either servants or small tradesmen; and if one of our ragged ones had entered such a place it would have excited a panic. Those classes, indeed, had never been taught habits of thrift or of prudence, and hence they never thought of that "rainy day" which sooner or later comes to all. But the Ragged School speedily taught this lesson, and there are now 100 such Banks, with above 28,000 depositors. During the last twelve years alone the number has increased by fifty-four, and the depositors have increased nearly two-thirds. Reviewing the history of these Banks, and our eighty-two Clothing Clubs, it is not too much to say that, what our religious instruction has done for the soul, these and similar agencies have done for the body; and thus, both combined, have fitted myriads both for this world and for the next.

The same remark may be made as respects our Mothers' Meetings. Who ever thought, twenty-five years ago, that it would be possible to get the wives of costermongers, mendicants, and of drunkards to assemble for industrial and religious instruction? The very idea seemed Quixotic, and, to the man of the world, savoured of fanaticism; and yet in this, as in all similar cases, as has been well said, "the fanatics are always found to win in the end." But the question having been submitted, whether adults could not be trained for God as well as their children, Mothers' Meetings were

started, with that signal success which has marked most of our novel plans during the past twenty-five years. In the year 1853, Mothers' Meetings first became a prominent feature in the Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, when it was seen that twenty-four Schools had adopted this plan, and had attracted 770 mothers. But now there are no less than ninety-four such meetings—a few including fathers—with no less than 3,389 members. By this plan, many an idle or drunken mother has been taught to "show piety at home;" and, in numberless cases, they have become as stepping-stones to the Church—the members, by their simple faith, and their lives of active virtue, showing how true religion can ennoble the humblest.

And so, were we to go through the long catalogue of Industrial Classes, Sick Clubs, Shoe-black Brigades, and Ragged Churches, we should be constrained to ask, as we glanced back these twenty-five years, Who could possibly have predicted the *now* from the *then?*

Yet we trust that this question is not asked in any spirit of vainglory. For in all this gradual development of the great from the little, we trace the hand of One who saw what we could not possibly see, "the end from the beginning," and who, whilst he suggested the various agencies, anointed the labourers for this great gospel mission. If, then, there has been such manifest success that even the worldling cannot ignore it, we are constrained in adoring gratitude to exclaim, "See what God—not man—has wrought!"

In this spirit we desire to continue our combat with the social vice and misery which still darken our land. For though we have worked for twenty-five long years in this part of God's vineyard, the work is clearly not yet finished. The thieves' college still trains the young for Newgate, and the race of the Fagins of Field Lane is not yet extinct. The "Penny Gaff" still renders sin attractive; and Jezebel, with brazen brow and stage-strut, trains the daughters of the poor how to live without labour. So the flaring gin palace and less gaudy beershop initiate the youth of London and other large towns into the British sin of drunkenness. Nor is it a less terrible fact to him who regards the future of our country, that whilst the wealthier classes grow richer every year, the poorer classes are sinking into a still deeper poverty. Above all—in this land of gospel light—the growing strides of the "evil heart of unbelief," either in the shape of Romanism or of atheism, prove that our warfare with sin has not yet concluded.

If, then, Ragged Schools were needed twenty-five years ago, we think that no one but he who is blind to the "signs of the times" can think them less needful now. For, however much secular educationists may have discussed the question, and however some red-tapists may have depreciated our plans, no other scheme has yet even been tried to ameliorate the condition of these unhappy classes. We would, then, pursue our present schemes, and, as in the past, add to them such other plans as may seem specially adapted to reach the hearts and the homes of the outcast or destitute. For knowing that there is "much land yet to be possessed," we would echo the words of Caleb (Numbers xiii. 30), "Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it!"

OUTLINE OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

TWENTY-FIVE years have now elapsed since the promoters of the Ragged School movement commenced their initial efforts to meet the educational necessities of the lowest section of the London poor. And, although a quarter of a century has now been occupied in this great work, it is a matter for much thankfulness to Almighty God that some of the promoters are still actively engaged in it at this day, and among them the nobleman who to-night fills the chair, and who has done so on each occasion of the twenty-five anniversaries of the Society's existence. The Committee rejoice in having had for so many years the privilege of fostering and extending the operations of the Central Society.

Not only so, but the friends of the poor in foreign countries had their attention drawn to the new movement in Britain, and in order to understand the operations, and to inquire into the results, in some cases sent deputations to this country, and in others by means of correspondence. The Committee endeavoured to sustain the movement, and meet the demand for information, by the appointment of officers, by the publication of a monthly magazine, by the issuing of annual reports and occasional papers, and by means of the platform and the press in general. The success attending the simple Ragged School encouraged the formation of other and kindred movements, such as the Shoe-blacks, Ragged Churches, the Refuges, the Industrial Schools, Emigration, and Reformatories.

The new Schools, and those for the first time added to the list last year, are located in Little James Street, Lisson Grove; London Street, Ratcliff; Motley Street, Curtain Road; Bedford Street, London Hospital; Danzell Street, Drury Lane; and Duke Street, Aldgate. In these, and in other Schools longer established, the additional operations as part of last year's results were seventy.

The number of Schools and Scholars upon the Society's list completed for the year 1838 are—191 School Buildings, in which are conducted 267

Sunday Schools, having an average attendance of 32,134; also 182 Day Schools, with an average attendance of 24,050 (the number of names on the books is 33,260); also 207 Evening Schools, with an average attendance of 9,414 (the number of names on the books is 15,239). These figures show an increase of average attendance upon those of last Report, of 777 Sunday scholars, and of 1,987 Day School scholars.

The attendance at the Sunday Schools could be almost indefinitely increased at will. The only obstacle in the way is the want of Voluntary Teachers. The Committee have pleasure in reporting that the number of these is increasing. In twenty-five years the numbers have swelled from 200 to 3,419, and last year's increase was 272. Among these Christian workers there is an increasing number of those who were formerly scholars in the Schools. The number given in the last Report was 186, which is now increased to 241.

Although the number of scholars in the Day Schools increased last year by 1,987 children, yet the increase of Paid Teachers was only three. The number last year was 416; it is now 419, viz., 233 in Day Schools, 160 in Evening Schools, and 26 in the Industrial.

As the funds of the Schools will not admit of an increase of teachers, the teachers are aided by Paid Monitors, of whom 581 were employed last year.

Bible Classes are specially conducted in most of the Schools, and the scholars attend the meetings for prayer held by the teachers, and they are thus brought into gospel light and under religious influences that have proved to many God's power manifested to the salvation of the soul. This is partly shown by as many as 232 scholars having become communicants in different churches who were in 36 Schools, but these do not perhaps by far include all.

In the Ragged Schools, the Clothing Clubs are 83 in number, and the amount subscribed by the members has been £1,442 10s. There are several other efforts of a similar kind, with varied objects, the Blanket Loan Club, the Coal Club, the Sick Club, the Burial Club, and the Barrow Club.

The Weekly Dinner movement has not only been continued, but extended, through the active agency of the Destitute Children's Dinner Fund. The cost of the dinner varies from 2½d. to 4d., and the child to whom it is supplied has to eat it on the premises, and to pay ½d. or 1d. towards the cost, according to the rules of the Committee.

Scholars' Prizes have for sixteen years been awarded to boys and girls from Ragged Schools, for good characters in situations held for twelve or more months. For fourteen years the average number of prizes successfully claimed was 580, but last year it was 681, and this year it was 728. The last applications were from 68 Schools, and for 372 girls and 356 boys, 254 of whom had taken them in previous years, and some for five consecutive times.

Old Scholars' Meetings have been held in several Schools, and with much advantage in renewing a connection with former scholars. It was gratifying to find many of them had become members of churches.

Ragged Churches are conducted in 98 Schools, with an average attendance of 6,368 persons, against 6,337 last year.

Mothers' Meetings are conducted in 94 Schools, and are attended by an

average of 3,389 members. With the Mothers' Meeting there is generally a Maternity Society, and in some a Loan Society.

The Penny Banks are now 110, with 28,672 depositors, who, during the year, deposited a total of £10,404, and in the same period withdrew £9,951, leaving in the banks only £453; so that on an average each Bank had a balance of only £4 2s. 4¾d.

The Bands of Hope, for inculcating temperance principles among the young, have been conducted and reported upon by 31 Schools, where the number of members was 3,041, or 98 to each Band.

In 11 of the Schools there are Sunday Rest Bands, and the number of members has increased from 128 to 1,217.

In 86 Schools there are Lending Libraries, having in the whole 15,133 volumes, or an average of 183 to each.

Bibles have been supplied to the scholars at 4d. for which 10d. had been paid, and during the year 1,440 children have become possessed of a complete copy of the Word of God.

The Shoe-black Brigades have just completed their 18th year of self-effort for self-support, and their usual success has not forsaken them. Their earnings last year amounted to £8,830, being £992 in excess of the preceding year. The number of boys employed on an average was 377, which was an increase on the year before of 22. The money earned last year was on an average for each boy £23 8s. 6d. or 9s. weekly.

With the close of last year the Committee completed another octavo book of Ragged School records, by issuing the 20th volume of the "Ragged School Union Magazine." This periodical has been found of great service in keeping up the interest of the movement and more widely spreading it. Its publication nearly supersedes the necessity of advertisements in other channels, and although its trade returns do not meet the cost of production, yet on the whole the serial may be considered to economise the funds of the Society.

Reference was made in the last Report to the scheme recently adopted for the rating of Ragged School-rooms to the relief of the poor. Seventeen of the Schools last year report having been compelled to pay £260 as poor-rates, and parish officials are making increased efforts to levy these rates and to enforce the payment. To prevent this, the Committee have taken active steps, in conjunction with the Committee of the Sunday School Union and others, to obtain relief by legislative authority, and have prepared a Bill, which has been brought into the House of Commons. The Schools have freely sent in petitions to the House praying for the Bill to pass. This Bill was read the first time, and the time fixed for the second reading is June 16th.

The finances of the Parent Society show the receipts of the year to have been £5,718, and the payments £5,611. Of these payments, £2,491 was granted in augmentation of the teachers' salaries, and which, with £1,869 towards the liquidation of debts, &c., of the Schools, made a total of £4,860 paid in aid.

That the prosperity of the Ragged School movement should have continued for twenty-five years, and proved constantly progressive, has been a source of much gratification to the Committee and those associated with them in this field of labour. Yet there has been no change in the teaching of the

grand old "story of the Cross"—the gospel of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is the real antidote for counteracting the poisonous literature sown broadcast among the poor; and this must be the protest to those false friends who would withdraw the Bible from their Schools, and be content with merely a secular education for the people. The Committee of the Ragged School Union, and the Local Committees of the London Ragged Schools, have ever been foremost in promoting secular education, but not apart from the word of God. To impart the arts of reading and writing is to give power, which, without the safe guiding of holy writ for its proper use, may be employed for promoting crime, for making its detection increasingly difficult, and for causing its punishment to be more expensive. Our police records sadly prove that the cause of crime is not merely to be traced to man's ignorance of reading and writing, but rather to his want of perception of his moral and religious obligations. The course the Committee have pursued in the past is one that they should not only not deviate from in the future, but, if possible, adhere to with a firmer grasp; for recent legislation having placed the franchise more freely in the hands of the people, who will thereby exercise a considerable influence in the government of our beloved country, they feel more than ever the necessity of being firm in their principles, useful to their country, and faithful to their God.

PROCEEDINGS AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION,

Held at Exeter Hall on Monday Evening, May 10th, 1869.

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K.G., PRESIDED.

The noble Chairman was supported by Messrs. T. Barnes, W. J. Maxwell, and Joseph Payne, Vice-Presidents of the Union. We also noticed Sir. R. W. Carden, Revs. Dr. Landells, J. Boyd, H. S. Brown, W. Curling, J. P. Chown, J. Flindt, Newman Hall, C. Llewellyn, B. Preece, H. Sinders, J. Wilkinson, J. H. Wilson; Colonel Griffin, Capt. Eastwick, Dr. Cross; Messrs. R. Johnson, Thomas Wright, &c., &c.

After singing, prayer was offered by the Rev. J. H. Wilson. Mr. J. G. Gent, the secretary, read the Twenty-fifth Annual Report and the balance-sheet for the past year.

The Noble PRESIDENT said,—It is the duty, and in my own case, it is very much the pleasure, of a Chairman to be short, but he ought also if possible to be sweet, and I intend to be so upon the present occasion, by announcing to you that, in addition to many of your old established metropolitan friends, you will be addressed to-night by friends from Liverpool, Manchester, and Bradford, all of them co-workers in this great operation, and all come here to express their sympathy with this movement, and to show that that great principle that took its rise, under God's blessing, in the city of London, is now being diffused through all the great cities of this mighty empire. Now you have been told, and I dare say many of you were here upon our anniversary, when this Association had

reached its twenty-first year there was much rejoicing that it had reached the period of manhood. You are now told that we are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary, that we have now reached that period which is ordinarily called a quarter of a century. But you must bear this in mind, that as time goes on, people grow old, and yet we may thank God, that though many of the supporters and promoters of this Association are advancing in years, and probably declining in strength, these Schools themselves, the institutions themselves, are advancing in vigour, and assuming a proportion and a strength that gives us full hope that God will be pleased to raise up in the places of those who shall be removed, other agents to carry on this great work, until such time as, by his blessing, there shall no longer be any need for Ragged Schools, or for those various institutions that are now intended to extend physical, moral, and religious relief to the poor, the destitute, and the forgotten. I confess to you, the Report was good enough to say that I had watched over this Institution for twenty-five years. I am very jealous of that remark. I have watched over them for more than twenty-five years. This is the twenty-fifth anniversary, but we had some two or three years of preliminary labour and anxiety; and though I do not wish to abate any part of the little praise that is due to me, I only mention this to bring to recollection that I have spent many years of my life in the promotion of this mighty work. And those years of experience bring me to this conclusion, and I say it without fear of being gainsayed, that a nobler or a truer movement, or a more Christian movement, was never begun in any age or country. I believe that the blessing of God has rested most singally upon the efforts of all those to whom you have entrusted the care and superintendence of these great operations. I have said it before, and I repeat it now, I believe that out of those wretched children dragged out of the gutter, and out of the mire, plucked from the very midst of human degradation and misery, you will extract and polish some of the brightest jewels that ever shone in any earthly crown. I believe that these institutions are a standing proof, a striking proof, an unanswerable proof, an overwhelming proof of the great truth of the gospel. I do not desire a higher proof, I do not desire a richer body of evidences than that which I have before me. I should like to take some of the many of your scoffing infidels, who, with all the fripperies of their intellects, knowing nothing about the matter, question the truth of the gospel, and not only the gospel, but also question the veracity of that old book, the Old Testament. I should like to take some of these; if they had a spark of candour in them, but the large proportion of them have no candour at all, and show them our Ragged School Union. I should like to take them first with me in a circumnavigation of all the depths and haunts of sorrow and degradation, and of filth, in which these wretched creatures are found. I should like to take them from thence into the Ragged School, and let them see those poor creatures under the tuition of those admirable men and women, the Ragged School teachers. I should like to bring them afterwards to Exeter Hall, and let them see the children when they are gathered here to receive the rewards and prizes; and any man who could see them, with their confident looks, their sparkling eyes, and their little hearts beating with excitement and pleasure, as they pass before me here to receive their prizes—and it has been my duty and my joy many times to give them—I say if he could see them, as they pass before me to receive the prizes for good behaviour, for keeping their situations, and for all those manifestations of moral and religious character, and if he had seen them before in their rags, and filth, and degradation, he would have declared the change utterly impossible; and I ask, What has done it? It is the gospel of Jesus Christ; and I do sincerely believe that the blessings have come

down upon you with a double force, and with an increased intensity, because you have not directed your labours to the rich and the powerful, to the honourable and the great, but you have ventured into the very recesses of human woe and misery and deformity, and have plucked the most forgotten, the destitute, and the neglected. And you have looked upon them as creatures of like passions with yourselves, born of the same race, redeemed by the same Saviour, and destined to the same immortality; and in that spirit, and joy, and duty, you have plucked out these wretched creatures, these brands from the fire; and see how they are shining before you, the reward of your labours, and meditate how they will still more be the reward of your labours and your joy, when they shall stand with you before the bar of judgment, when they shall be all admitted with you into the eternity of bliss to share your joy and your peace for ever. Well, then, bear this in mind, and I will tell you of it—so long as I have breath I will never cease to impress it upon you—stand fast to the great principles you have enunciated; do not be led aside and believe with those who preach up to you about secular education, and talk about science and art, and literature, and this 'ology, and the other 'ology, and all those distressing words with which they crack one's ears now-a-days. Do not be led aside from that which you have up to the present time held. It is the gospel which has done the work, it is the gospel only which will do the work, and if you choose to give up the Gospel for intellectual attainments you may have a nation of the highest refinement in mind, but of the greatest barbarity in heart; you may have a nation rich in all intellectual knowledge, but utterly degraded in every moral sense, and not fit to be compared with the poorest Ragged School child, who can tell you that he or she has been brought up in the knowledge and fear of the Lord Jesus Christ, and has thus not only hope in this life, but also feels that he has redeemed them with his own most precious blood. I say this, because I see what is looming in the distance. I see a gradually increasing desire for compulsory education. Now if education be compulsory, it must be secular; it is impossible that you can bring up all the children of the nation, and instruct them into one religious belief. Secular it must be, and secular it will be, and secular will be the state of this country, until the day of its doom, when the whole empire of faith shall be overthrown. But now let me just call your attention to a bill which has been brought into the House of Lords, and which has gone down to the Commons; it is called the Habitual Criminals Bill. Now I had great occasion to watch the course of that bill, and I had very great occasion to inquire and ascertain, in different parts of London, the character, condition, and origin of many of these criminals, and I found that none of them came from the Ragged Schools; not one that I can trace, certainly not one that had ever received a prize at our hands in this place. They come, in all probability, and of a certainty, from that class that has not been brought within the benign influence of the Ragged School Union; they come from the neglected and forgotten class, and they are a standing proof, that if we would but extend this system, imperfect as it is, over the whole surface of this metropolis, we should reduce the supply of those that form the criminal class; we should have no more but just that number there ever must be so long as human nature continues what it is. There is, however, one sort of habitual criminals that do come out of the Ragged School Union—that is to say, they would be called "habituals" by the Sunday League Union—they are those habitual criminals who, having been so well taught in these Ragged Schools, do observe the Sabbath that was appointed by God for the rest of man, and for the worship of his holy temple. Not only do the children so generally, but—you have heard it alluded to in the address from Mr. Gent—there is at this moment in

London—and until I saw it with my own eyes I could not believe it—a band of children who have formed themselves into a union for the purpose of the observance of the Sabbath, pledging themselves neither to buy nor sell, nor to do anything inconsistent with the sanctity of the Lord's Day, and the rule is a good one, and the rule is observed. No child is allowed to join that union unless it be with the consent of its parents or guardians. 800 children have joined it already during two years, and we have not found a single instance in which their undertaking has been violated; and I confess that I was perfectly delighted when I went to take the chair some short time ago for the purpose of holding the anniversary. It was a public meeting of little children, and I never saw more joy, I may say dignified Christian satisfaction, than I saw beaming through the eyes flowing from the hearts of these little children, who had entered upon so good a work, and by the blessing of God had been enabled to succeed. It is this religious teaching that is the great principle of the Ragged School work. We do not slight what secular instruction we can impart during the short time that they are with us; but the great principle of the Ragged School, from which I trust you will never depart, is the instruction and the training of the most miserable classes in all the institutions of the Christian life. You know what by the blessing of God you have already attained to, and if you continue you will attain to yet greater achievements than those that have been already vouchsafed you. Now, as I have said, on a business of this sort it is not the province of the Chairman to give instructions. There is a proverb about carrying coals to Newcastle, and if I began to give advice on the matter to teachers, I should only be telling them what they know a great deal better than I do myself; but it is the duty and the privilege of the Chairman to give all the encouragement he can, and I do from my very soul, and from my inmost heart, give you all the encouragement that it is in the power of man to give. I believe you have achieved this much by the blessing of God, and I believe you will achieve much more. Go on in the course that you have begun, and show by all the results of your labours the truth of the power of the gospel, and I pray that all in these institutions, founded on love, and based upon the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, may pass through all the tempestuous seas of infidelity and ritualism, and lead the rest of their lives according to their beginning.

The Rev. W. CURLING moved the following resolution: "That the Report, an abstract of which has been read, be adopted, printed, and circulated, under the direction of the Committee; and that the Committee for the ensuing year be the gentlemen whose names are in this evening's printed programme." He said: I am rather out of place, I feel, in standing where I do just at the commencement of this meeting. My excellent friend Canon Champneys would have been here, only he is not well enough to be present, I am sorry to say; and a very high dignitary of our church would have been here, but has been unavoidably prevented by some other pressing engagement. I take the liberty of telling one and all the bishops of the English church, that there are no institutions which their parochial clergy are so proud of as these famous Ragged Schools which confer such immense benefit upon society. They tell me that I am a teacher in a parochial Ragged School, and so I am, and I delight to sit down in the midst of my ragged little scholars, to look them in the face, and to speak kind words, for whilst I am speaking kind words with a smiling face, they smile in return upon me, and whilst the kindly feeling of my heart goes out to them, it comes back into my bosom with a very animating influence, and I declare I never feel more thoroughly happy than in going through my densely crowded parish when these little urchins come up to me and say, "Good day, teacher," or "Good day, Mr. Curling," or something of that

kind. I assure you it is very music to my ear—some of the sweetest music that can ever delight my soul. And it is this feeling of friendship, which gives the parochial clergyman such a hold over the poor of his parish. And then, I bless God my Lord that this noble Institution has been so signally blessed by that Being upon whom it has so humbly and prayerfully depended during so many years. Why, it seems to me, there has been nothing but a series of glorious successes attending its path. All along you read in your Report, that whereas you had 8,000 scholars five years after your establishment, now you have 32,000 and more scholars in London alone. It tells me that these Ragged Schools are as much wanted as ever in the present state of society. I am sure that we, the parochial clergy, who go amongst our poor people with our various missionary agencies, encounter poverty of the most distressing character at this time; and therefore, in addition to the number of ragged children brought into our Schools, under ordinary circumstances, there will be a vast addition of pauper children brought into our Schools, arising out of the very fact that there have been very few years indeed during which poverty has so greatly prevailed as it prevails in our large parishes at this time. Why when I tell you that a poor fellow came to me, two or three days ago, and told me this pitiful tale, that he had not broken his fast all the day before, and that all he could do with his wife lately confined, and his daughter in the hospital, was to buy a penny loaf and a pennyworth of butter to satisfy the craving appetites of these ragged children, who had run home to him from our care, and that another, a poor woman, a widow, came to thank me just for a meat ticket that I had given her, and when she expressed her thanks so warmly, I was surprised, and said, "Well, my good woman, that is not such a great deal for you," she replied, "Ah, sir, you do not know the value of that ticket to me, for me and my children have not tasted animal food since last Christmas," perhaps you will scarcely believe it, especially some of our country friends, but we who live in the south of London, we who have nearly 50,000 paupers in London alone, we know what distress really is. And there now you are trying in every possible way to meet this distress, and you are taking the ragged children of these poor and wretched people into your Schools, and training them up to be useful men and women. My lord, one thing I could hear more about, that is, what we are to do with many of our poor ragged children after we have advanced them in our Schools. Up to a certain point, I find that to be one of the most difficult problems to solve. True, you send them to one place and another, and what could be more gratifying than to learn that his lordship had upwards of 700, who have come from situations that they have creditably filled, some for five, some of them for seven, and some of them for ten years. But still there are a great number for whom it is very difficult indeed to provide; but I am sure I can say to my Liverpool friends, and to my Bradford friends, we have all, whether in London or in the country, notwithstanding the difficulties I have mentioned, something to say about the grand successes which God has given to our humble and prayerful labours. I could tell you about my boy, the hop-picker from Kent, the first scholar I had in my School in Southwark; how he was when I first knew him, ragged and wretched and miserable, and now how he is an artillery soldier in India, and from the plains of India he wrote the other day to his mother in England, a letter expressive of gratitude to God for the mercies which he had received. And I could tell you of another boy sent from my School to the Southwark Shoeblack Brigade, who, in his honesty, picked up a five-pound note close to the railway terminus, but instead of putting it in his pocket, and keeping it for himself, took it at once up to his master, and how afterwards, when the ownership was

properly sought and could not be found, it was put for his own benefit to his account with the bank. We could tell you of this again and again, and we can show you how God is abundantly blessing our labours. My lord, I am pleased particularly to find that this Society is not a sham. You do not do here as is done in some other places, you do not say that you have a Ragged School, and then take into your Schools children who are not ragged; but you maintain your principle. You do not interfere with the national and the parochial children of our parishes, but you take into your Schools only those who cannot afford to pay a fraction of a penny to their support. Keep to that principle and you will do well. I like to see the shoeless boy come into my School in his ragged and tattered clothing, and I say directly, that is the boy for me. Never mind that his hands are not washed, never mind that his face is not clean, and his hair uncombed, never mind all that; what he ought to be will come on presently. But you get the ragged dirty boy if you please first of all, and you will see how we will wash him, and comb him, and clean, and send him out so as to be something worth looking at. I like, rather I love, let me say love, for liking is not enough for me as to your Ragged Schools. I not only love your real Ragged Schools, but I also love your Ragged Churches, and I wish you could do something to help me to plant a Ragged Church in the midst of my ragged parish. I should thank you for that, but indeed Ragged Churches, or whatever they may be called, are most admirable agencies in connection with the working of this noble Institution. After you have got hold of the boys and the girls, you soon by that means get hold of the parents; and after you have got hold of their parents, so as to speak kind words to them, then you them into our places of public worship. We do not want grand places of public worship, we want them more homely. Oh yes, the children are too much accustomed to penny gaffs already, if my friends know what they are, for us to think of introducing them to the sensational scenery or the sensational acting in an ecclesiastical theatre. My lord, those were fine sentiments which you uttered just now; they found a deep and complete echo in my heart; those were admirable sentiments that the Report expressed, which says that this Institution will remain firm to its ancient principles, and will also abide faithful to its God. To speak of what you, my lord, spoke of afterwards, that there may be introduced at some time or other a government scheme of compulsory education from which religion must be excluded. I do not know what any Government may think, about that I cannot answer for—but, my friends, we see how events are coming on now-a-days, how important national measures are often brought forward without any reference to true and divine religion, and with an entire reference to worldly policy—it may come to be said that even Christianity is an antiquated thing that must give way to some more perfect ideas; and it may be considered only in accordance with worldly prudence and propriety that the children of the poor and all the children of England should be left to go without the influence of any particular religious bias just because all religions may be equally good for something or equally good for nothing. But then, my lord, you, as a noble Christian institution, say at once, We repudiate all such sentiments; we will never adopt for one single moment any such worldly policy, we should lose the very power of our education in our Ragged Schools if we were to give up our Christian teaching, or to remove from it that grand lever, the Bible; and therefore, when I look around me, and see those of all Christian denominations, I say, God Almighty grant, in his mercy, that whether we be Church of England men or Protestant Dissenters, that we may all join together in upholding that standard of our national faith, our precious Bible, against rationalism on the one hand, and Popery on the other.

The Rev. J. P. CHOWN said:—There are very few meetings, my lord, that are held in this hall in this season of the year, that I, in common with Christian people, look upon without considerable interest, and amongst these it appears to me that the Ragged School Union is one whose work is eminently needed, whose character is eminently Christian, and whose results have been abundantly and graciously honoured by God. Till, therefore, the day, and I think, in my part, it is somewhat in the future, to which reference has been made already this evening, when there may be no ragged boys and ragged girls, we shall each of us say, "May heaven bless and prosper our Ragged Schools." I feel an interest in this matter on many accounts, and I would like very briefly to mention one or two reasons why I feel a great pleasure in advocating the cause of Ragged Schools. I do so for one reason, because they appear to me to be eminently Christian, that is, Christ-like in their character and work. If there is one society more than another that has caught the spirit and is sure to have the blessing of Him who came from heaven to earth to seek and to save that which was lost, I think it will be the Ragged School. If there is one society more than another to which the divine command has come, that whilst the gospel should be preached to all the world, beginning at Jerusalem, and that has begun to spread it in the waste and desolate places of our British Jerusalem, it appears to me it is the Ragged School. If there is one society that, in its loving search after the outcasts, has caught the spirit of Him who tells us that we are to leave behind the ninety-and-nine folded ones in keeping, whilst we seek after the one poor desolate wanderer that has gone astray, I think it is the Ragged School; and if there is one that has caught the spirit of Him by whom the poorest and the vilest are welcomed, and who find in his love a refuge in which they are fed and clothed for immortal blessedness, it appears to me that it is a union like our own, which, with its Field Lane and other homes, gives a school for the ignorant and a home for those who, but for that, would have none; and I feel that a union which seeks these things is entitled to our regard, and deserves our sympathy and support, and I rejoice in it, my lord and Christian friends, because I feel it is doing a work which is promoting the spread of the gospel all over the world. Let the gospel sound a trumpet tongue to the uttermost ends of the earth; let it peal abroad in every language, and every country under heaven; let it be borne by those who shall declare it in the dark places till every islet shall be gemmed with its glory, and heart-quickened into life by its power, and those who do most for it will do most for Ragged Schools. At the same time, I feel, in advocating the one, I am, to a certain extent, advocating the other, and we shall all, I am sure, desire to bear in mind how many of the dark places of the earth, full of the habitations of cruelty, are to be found under the shadow of the sanctuary, and in the privileged spots of our own beloved land at home. I believe, Christian friends, most devoutly and earnestly in the charity that begins at home, but I do not believe for one single moment in the spirit which makes that the plea for never getting away from home, lest it should see what would open its hand, touch its heart, and call forth its sympathy; but they keep it tied up in their purse, and buttoned up in their pockets so closely, that like enough the poor puny thing has by this time come to a premature death for want of circulation and exercise. I fear that the gold has the yellow jaundice, and that the notes are no better than waste paper. My idea of charity, and the religion of which charity is the soul, is that it should be like the smiling sun in the sky, that it should pour forth its beams, and give heat to the full extent of the circumference upon which it shall rest, but that its beams shall be brightest and warmest upon those who are nearest to it; and it

appears to me that in this work, which begins at home amongst the neglected and the destitute, you have an example of true charity. People sometimes talk about John Bull, and I have sometimes tried to picture to myself what he is like, and there has occurred to my mind the picture of a very worthy man, somewhat advanced in life, with a broad beaming countenance, a noble brow, and a great brimming, overflowing heart, and I have thought of what a large family he has, about 22,000,000 altogether, and there are sure to be some ragged ones among that number, you may depend upon that. Well, amongst all these he says he has some of the finest men in the world, but he also has some who are a great deal of trouble to him. There are some mopes and incapables in the family, who are a great trouble to him, but there are the neglected, the uneducated, and the vicious, they are the greatest trouble of all; and I have sometimes thought that I could see the personification of the name by which our country is designated, looking upon these little outcasts, and wondering that with all the religious appliances of this land, there should be these poor Arabs in the great and mighty metropolis, and I fancy I have heard him say to Christian people and well-to-do persons, take these young ones before they have grown up into the maturity of sin and vice, clasp them to your bosom rather than fling them like reptiles out of your sight, teach them, and train them, and feed them, and clothe them, and civilise them, and Christianise them. If you neglect them they are sure to be a cankerworm and a curse in your social life; if you educate them, and teach them, and train them, they are sure to be a blessing, and assuredly God will aid you in the work, and his blessing shall descend upon you. But I feel an interest in those of Ragged Schools, too, my lord, when I think of the precious influence brought to bear upon the minds of those who are taught, and to which you have so properly referred. The influence that is brought to bear, what is it? Why, it is the mercy that is twice blessed, it blesses those that give as well as those that receive; and though it is thought that its influence may seem sometimes to fail, let it not be withheld upon that account—let it not be discontinued. There is no more reason for withholding it than there would be for the withholding of the sunlight and the showers because sometimes they are poured on spots not ready to receive and to profit by them. I love to think that there is nothing good in this world ever wasted. I do not believe in the wasted sunbeam that lights upon this earth that has not done its bright and blessed work before it passes from it; I do not believe in the wasted raindrop, whether it fall upon the blackened parched lip of the traveller or into the flowered dale in the desert, or into the tiny shell in the ocean, where it becomes a pearl; and I cannot believe in the kind word wasted; I do not believe in Christian influence wasted; I cannot believe in the power of the Word of God wasted; the Divine Giver of that Word has assured us that it shall not return unto him void, that it shall accomplish the thing he pleases, and prosper in the thing whereunto he has sent it. The old Thracians, my lord, used to have a representation of the love of God in the figure of a three-beamed sun, one beam shining upon a rock and melting it into paradise soil, another shining upon an ocean of ice and melting it into crystal; another shining upon a corpse and kindling it into life. But there in the gospel you have not merely a three-beamed but a many-beamed sun, whose power shall melt, and vivify, and strengthen, and civilise, and save. Then, my lord, I rejoice in this work too because of the gracious and blessed results that have already sprung from it. Why some of the loveliest and brightest gems are dug out of the deepest and darkest mines, and some of those who have been placed on the highest eminences of spiritual blessedness and power have been raised out of the deepest wretchedness. Why, who can

tell me what those red-coated Garibaldini of your Shoe-black Brigade may become if they profit by the instruction imparted! I have seen one of them polishing the understandings, I was going to say, of the passers-by, and sending them away sometimes with about the only bit of polish about them; and I never see one but I am reminded of an anecdote which, I doubt not, you have already heard, of two men in the House of Commons, one of whom had a seat that was bought for him, or he would never have had it, and a name that was given him, or he would never have got it, and a fortune that was left to him, or he would never have been able to make it; and another whose fame was known in all parts of the country. The latter ventured once to differ from the former on a question of statistics, at which he said, "How dare you correct me on a matter of statistics; didn't—didn't—didn't you clean my fathers boots?" The other one paused, and then replied, "Yes, I did, and didn't I clean them well." There is what will make senators out of your shoe-blacks, and great men out of your brigade, and great men for the world, who, but for the Ragged Schools, might have been deep down in all the miseries and wretchedness and depravity of human nature. Then will you permit me to say, Christian friends, that you must continue your work? You remember the Brierley colliery accident the other day, when the pit fell in, and the men in it were buried in the dark tomb—buried alive within its dark depths; and one of them said, "Well, it's dark here, mates; but let us be thankful the light has not gone out of heaven." It had not gone out of heaven, noble spirit that depend upon it, but it was only when they heard their comrades through the strata, and labouring to bring them up out of the pit, that they knew that they should ever see the light again. There may be some down in the dark pit of moral degradation and misery, and others may sometimes hear the whispers that reach them from the memories of the past, and they say sometimes to another, "Well, it is dark here, but let us be thankful the light has not gone out of heaven;" and you must dig down to them and bring them up out of the pit if they are ever to stand in the light. When those poor colliers came up out of that pit, the first word that one boy said was, "Have you sent to tell my mother?" There is noble stuff in that boy, depend upon it; and there are boys down there in the degradation into which they have been flung, who are to be pitied rather than blamed, who only need bringing into the light of day; and then, as the sunbeams woke music from the silent statues of old, so the light of Christian love, with its warm beams and reviving influence, shall call out assurances and thankfulness and high joy that may develop into declarations of praise and glory and gratitude to God. And then, my lord, only to mention one other, that I rejoice very much in this Ragged School Union, in that it seeks to prevent crime by going to the very root of the evil. Lifeboats are very precious things to take a drowning man off the wreck when his vessel has struck; but lighthouses are more precious still, that warn the mariner of his danger and prevent the wreck. "How did you know it was the British coast on which you were cast?" was asked of a sailor who had been shipwrecked. "Because," said he, "the lifeboat put out to us, your honour." It seems to me that your Union is like one of those social lighthouses pouring its living light upon the heaving, whirling waters of misery and sin and temptation, showing where the rocks and quicksands are. Long may it stand, ay, stand as long as it is needed. There was a short time ago a rumour that the Eddystone lighthouse had fallen, and that rumour sent a thrill of deep emotion through the country. The Queen heard of it in her Osborne Palace, and sent word to ask if it was true. There was a time when, in the fog and storm, the lighthouse could not be seen, and the truth of the matter could not be tested; but the fog cleared away and out flamed the living flame from the

noble building, which told it had not fallen, by the brightness of the living beams it cast over the dark waters around. Thus may our Union stand, and amidst all treacherousness and temptation, sin and evil. We come to-night into the tower to trim the lamp afresh, and to quicken the brightness of the flame; and as we look out on the waters around us we see the barques of the little children drifting with the current. They are going fast on to the rocks and quicksands of temptation and vice; trim the lamp again and let the light flame out that there may be no mistake about it; we trim it afresh and ask the watchman, "What of the night?" We look out upon the darksome waters, and see, there they are kindling rock lights, endeavouring to draw and allure the vessels to destruction; but let us trim the lamp again, and now it casts a clear and bright and steady light out upon the water; its beams shoot across the deep once more, and when we have trimmed it, we ask again, "Watchman, what of the night?" The answer is, "The boats are struggling to safety; thousands have been saved already; thousands have been saved through the bright flame of the lantern."

Mr. RICHARD JOHNSON, of Manchester, said:—Twelve years ago I walked up the avenue of this hall on purpose to see the Secretary of this Union to get some papers and information from him, in order to further the object of starting a like institution in a little village a long way from here. Mr. Gent was kind enough to furnish me with all the necessary information he was able to give, and he was kind enough to load me with papers. I went down to Manchester as full of it as possible, and I was led, at length, to form a similar Union to this, though on a smaller scale. I was led to fix upon a gentleman who should become the president of that union, and to exhibit to him the plans and schemes that were contemplated, and he immediately joined in the scheme; he took it up as you did this, at the beginning, and not only gave his advice, but also a goodly number of those sovereigns which Mr. Chown has been speaking of, and so we formed our Ragged School Union. The gentleman is our esteemed friend, Mr. Barnes. Now, my lord, I think I may say with very great truth, that not only in London, but also in the provinces, these institutions are a necessity; and that though in the nineteenth century it may seem somewhat of an anomaly, that we are turning back to pick up a destitute population. But I must say I think that when the venerable Robert Raikes opened his heart, and commenced his school, it was not for those who are now in the Schools, it was for the poorest and the most unfortunate in the gutters and the alleys and the lowest places. Now if we had kept more to the original object in view, we should have better times of it than we can at present boast of; but, unfortunately for us, we have now to pick up those who have been left behind. I don't know whether it is as bad here, I think not so much in London, but up our way ignorance prevails to a dreadful extent. Out of 8,000 children who were examined, 4,000 could not say the Lord's Prayer, and something like 3,000 of them could not write their own names; and if we look at that one fact it will be sufficient to prove to us how necessary these institutions are. But without looking at statistics, and a lot of figures, those of you who, like myself, walk amongst the poor, find out, no doubt, that the poverty of this land is to a great extent self-imposed, and the result of sheer ignorance. I went into one cottage a short time ago in order to see and pity, and, if needful, to assist. After I had sat talking with the occupant, I said to him, "Do you smoke?" "Oh yes," he said, "I like a pipe." "How many ounces do you smoke in a week?" I asked. "Well," he said "about three." I took a note of that and put it down for 9d. "Well," I said, "I suppose you like a pint of beer now-and-again?" "Oh yes," he said, "I have a pint of beer every day, and a quart on a Saturday." And I reckoned up that that was another shilling a week at the least; and here was

this man without a stool to sit upon, without a single chair or table, or, indeed, anything else, spending 1s. 9d. a week for what he could do without, and yet he was coming to me and pleading poverty because he wanted me to pay for the education of his children. And there is this thought upon my mind, that if it was not for the sin, if it was not for the improvidence, if it was not for the drink, if it was not for the wholesale ignorance that abounds upon it, our land would be all that was necessary to support its population; for I believe there is money enough and there is work enough in England to make it the happiest place upon the whole earth. Well, my lord, and how is this to be reached? I believe it is to be reached by Christian agency. But there are other things to be considered. This age does not appear to be so prolific in Christian efforts as it should be. I think I shall speak the sentiments of a good many of our Ragged School friends, that they find it very much easier to get the funds than to get the labourers. Now, how is this to be explained? Why, I believe it is because young ladies and gentlemen are going to live out in the country instead of living, as they used to do, in the towns and cities. There is no leaven amongst them to bring them up to a higher and better state of things; there is no one living amongst them to set a good example, and thus elevate them. Now, I am not going to altogether object to the fact of the ladies and gentlemen living in the country; there may be good reasons for doing it, their health may require it, and it is a duty they owe themselves to attend to their health; but if they would only, when they have got their health and strength perfect, come and devote themselves to this work like Moses, when he went up Mount Sinai and came down again amongst the people with his face shining with the glory of the Lord; so let them come back, with their faces full of smiles and their hearts full of gratitude to God and love to their fellow-creatures, go on with their work. We must have more contact with the masses, we cannot love them without more contact. If we separate our homes we shall separate our sympathies. If we take our persons from one end of the city we shall think nothing about the other end of it. We must imitate the example of our noble Chairman, who has gone among the poor himself. Let me ask you, my Christian friends, to come more into contact with these poor unfortunate people. Don't be afraid of the consequences. Some little time ago it was my privilege to know a packer in a large warehouse. One night he came home just as I was finishing for the day, and he had under each arm an empty sack rolled up. He took one and, throwing it to me, said "There, take that, and come after me." I said to him, "You are very polite certainly," but I took it up and followed him, as I knew his mission was mercy. I followed him, and he went down to some railway stables, and there he took his sack from under his arm and began to fill it with straw and called upon me to imitate his example. Immediately he had filled his sack, he took out a packing needle and sewed up the end of the sack, and then tossing it over the straw, he bid me do the same with mine. I sewed mine up accordingly, and then he took his sack, and throwing it over his shoulders, darted into the street, and told me to take up my sack, and come after him. "Stop a minute," I said, "I can't stand this. I can stand carrying the empty sack here, and I can stand filling it with straw, and sewing up the end, but this carrying it full of straw is too much for me." He says, "Come along, you will never repent it." Well, off he walked, and I took up my sack, and walked after him. He went along one street, and then down another, until he got into the poorest and worst part of the city, and at last he came to a wretched alley, and disappeared into a house where I could hardly see my way. However, I went up the creaking stairs after him. When he got to the top, he took out of his pocket what we in Lancashire call a "short six." He lighted

this with a lucifer, and stuck it against the wall in the garret, and then left me for a minute or two to look about me. Here I saw five or six heaps of rags huddled up in a corner, which turned out to be five or six poor children. They had not even a bed to lie upon, and there they lay on the floor, their little arms about one another. This noble man then took his bed and called upon me to help him, and so between us, he at the head, and I at the legs, managed to move them one by one very gently, until his bed was full. He then said, "Now for your bed, I am afraid it is rather hard;" and we moved the remainder of the poor little things and laid them on my bed; and when he had done—what a noble spirit he had—he said to me, "Don't they look nice, now?" And then he darted out of the room, and said, "I will be back in a minute," and very shortly he returned from a shop near, with a quartern loaf, half a pound of butter, two ounces of Souchong, and two or three things of that kind. He laid then down by the side of the bed of those little children, whose mother was out drinking, and then he blew out the candle, and we returned down the stairs, and when we get into the dark street it was one o'clock in the morning. He walked along the street with such rapid strides, and with such energy, that I could scarcely keep up with him, and he seemed so silent and determined as though he could knock anybody down that spoke to him. But at last he stopped, and came and looked into my eyes, and then turning round, walked off at a quick pace again. Once more he came up to me, and watching me very closely, he said, with tears in his eyes, "My children will never want bread," and then he turned away. And on he strode until we reached the end of the street, when he came up to me, and his spirit—that spirit which makes a peasant as noble as a king—was beaming through his eyes, and he put his arms round my neck, and clasped me tightly, and there we stood looking up at the blue sky, with the stars looking down upon us, and he said to me, "Ah, how blessed it is when anybody can do good to his brother;" and pressing my hand with a fervent grasp he went away quickly, and left me to go home. Well, my friends, I want you to do like this, I want you to do what you can. There is none so humble in this meeting, none so young, none so old, but can get a heartful of it for nothing. Get it and use it on all occasions—it is the cheapest commodity in the world, and at the same time is the most blessed.

Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, then moved the following resolution, "That this meeting rejoices at the successes that have followed the labours of the Society in the past and previous years, and desires to express hearty thanks to Almighty God for the blessings that have evidently attended the efforts of the Committee." He said: Will you permit me very briefly to attempt to set before you the condition of the poor creatures of a class which this Ragged School Union and similar institutions seek to save? I shall call him the street Arab, and the street savage, the former being the name by which he is most familiarly known, and the other, which I think more correctly describes him, and I shall endeavour just to set before you something of his character and position. I do not speak of him either in his best or in his worst state, but the street Arab, the street savage, in his normal history, condition, and destination. Well then, he is generally the victim of parental unkindness and neglect. I do not say in all cases. It may be that his parents are not guilty, or to any great extent culpable. Indeed, he may be an orphan, without either parent or relative in the world to help him, or he may be the child of exceedingly poor parents—poor by sheer misfortune, who really cannot provide for him, or educate him, and who are compelled to turn him out that he may provide as well as he can for himself. But there are others who are poor enough, it is true, but poor almost through their own

misconduct—men who can make good wages, men who often earn £2, £3, £4, and £5 per week, and yet are so dissipated and so selfish, and so destitute of natural affection, that their children are neglected and turned out upon the streets to beg, or to steal, and thrive as best they may. Thus his rags have given the name which this Society bears, and ragged he is, and his rags testify to parental neglect; for there does not seem to have been the slightest attempt to mend or to patch his tattered garments. He knows nothing of any change of clothing, except from one mass of filthy rags to another just as filthy, and generally he has neither shoe nor stocking to his feet. Of course, the street Arab is in his person inexpressibly filthy; he has a very small knowledge of soap and water, and does not at all wish to increase his acquaintance with them; I never yet saw in a picture, even by an artist who devoted himself to such work, I never yet saw what appeared to me justice done to the rags and dirt, but he always appears a great deal nicer and cleaner, and in every way better in the picture than he really is. The street Arab is of course often in a state of ravenous hunger, but without a raven's chance of getting something to eat; indeed, in regard to food, the beast of the field and the birds of prey are in a position far preferable to that of our *street savage*, though he is our brother, my brother, your brother, the brother of the wealthiest in the land. Our horses and dogs are a thousand times better off than he is in regard to a supply of food. The Arab's home, if he have a home at all, is a most wretched and filthy and miserable place, such a place as you would not like to venture into, so filthy, so foul; perhaps not a chair to sit down upon; no fire to sit by, no bed on which to seek repose. But fiercely and angrily he is commanded to produce the results of his day's begging, and loud are the curses and heavy the blows inflicted by his father if he can produce nothing, or if not as much as was expected. His mind is not absolutely a blank, for a life cannot be spent in the streets of London without learning many things and picking up an education of a sort, and he may become keen, sharp, precocious, and clever in some respects. But he does not know how to read or write; every letter of the alphabet and every figure in our numerals is to him but a meaningless mark; and to the pleasures of knowledge he is a total stranger. If he be able to read, the stuff he does read does him more harm than good, and then he is in a state of moral debasement. Of course he could not repeat the Lord's Prayer, and could not tell you any one of the Ten Commandments; does not know what you mean when you ask him about such things; he has learned so far the names of God and Christ as to take them in vain in his cursing and blaspheming; but of a Saviour and a Father in heaven he knows nothing, and indeed his earthly father is such a monster of cruelty that you could not very easily impress that lad's mind with any attractive idea of God, by speaking of God as his Father in heaven. He tells lies, hardly knowing that it is wrong to tell them; and he steals, just as a cat or a dog steals, and with little more than a sense of so doing. He is a human being, it is true; but all that which is the characteristic of the human being, whether of moral or intellectual growth, is smothered, stunted, and stifled. He does not always live a long life or grow up to manhood, and the loss of health cannot be wondered at. He perhaps inherits a frail constitution from his parents, and when an infant he is taken to the gin-shop, and his cries are silenced by some stupefying draught, and then afterwards, as a matter of course, when you only think of their condition, it cannot be otherwise with children who are totally neglected in every sense, the springs of whose young life are poisoned with alcholic drinks, who are in a state of rags and wretchedness, and even drenched to the skin without a change of clothing; who never know what it is to have a meal of wholesome food, but live on filthy refuse from which a well-fed dog would

turn with aversion. When you consider the places they inhabit and their manners and habits altogether, it is to be expected, as a matter of course, that death makes sad havoc among them, and their parents, who have, perhaps, subscribed to the burial club, celebrate their funeral with an unwonted bout of drunkenness. My lord, the deaths of thousands of these poor creatures are murders, and murders committed by their own parents. If, however, by reason of an iron constitution, our street Arab lives through all these privations and this ill-treatment, what is likely to become of him? Well, he is likely to become a drunkard, a pauper, a criminal, or all three, alternately, successively, and at last permanently. He has never learnt any trade, and therefore as he grows up he is fit for nothing—nothing but for the overstocked, unskilled labour market; in fact, he is hardly fit for that, because he has never learned anything of industrious and diligent habits, and he is likely to be elbowed out of it by those more able than he is. Moreover, he has no love of independence, except that of a wild freedom from all restraint, and there is no self-respect or control, and he has no appreciation of any refined pleasures. There is no enjoyment for him but that which he can derive from pleasures most debasing, more especially from stupefying himself with intoxicating drink; and since, during his early days, he was free from all that control of home law and obedience to parents which is the foundation of civil society, his being allowed to run free from that culminates in a terrible result—the lawless boy becomes the lawless man, the companion of pickpockets, and if he enter uponthat career of crime, the chances are that he never leaves it, but continues to the end, thus being a terror and danger to society, costing, too, in one way or another, as a pauper or a felon, or both, perhaps, ten times as much as it would have cost to have brought him u to be a honest and hard-working man. I would remind you that these are the poor creatures whom this Union seeks to save and to rescue, to imbue with good principles, to train in good habits, to prepare for a sober, righteous, and godly life in this world, and for eternal salvation in the next. The metropolis sets an excellent example to the provinces. I am thankful for the encouragement which many of us in the provinces derive from this institution, the ingenious variety of its operations, and the great success with which it has pleased God to crown all the labours in which it is engaged. Amongst the many excellent operations of this Society there is, of course, the impartation of knowledge; but, as has been said, not of secular knowledge alone, but of religious knowledge, for without this the other would be, I do not say useless, I do not say a thing to be dreaded, but still miserably imperfect, for the heart plays as important a part in human life as does the intellect, if not, indeed, a more important part, and, indeed, the heart must be educated if a human] being is to be educated in any sense worthy of that expression; and therefore, with all respect to our excellent friends the three old R's, we must add another, and that R is religion. Then there is another great work, those ninety-four Mothers' Meetings, of about 4,000 mothers, and if only the mothers of these street Arabs can be brought under the kindly influence of Christian ladies, we may look for reform in home manners and home law; and if the mothers can influence the fathers by making the home more attractive than the public-house, then, perhaps, the fathers and mothers making it possible for their children to observe the fifth commandment there may be some observance of it, instead of the disrespect and defiance which are so widely prevailing now. One word in conclusion, my dear friends. In the gospel of Christ, was it not the love of Christ that constrained you to enter into this work? Is it not the love of Christ that is sustaining you in this work? and will you not give the love of Christ to sinful, perishing man the chief place in your

work? I know you will, assured as you must be that in your work there is just so much of good, so much of promise, so much of pre-eminence, as there is of Christ—that, and no more than that.

The Rev. Dr. LANDELLS said: You have heard a most graphic description of the street Arab. You have heard his case referred to again and again, and my feeling is that these poor helpless things, born in suffering and sin, born to a sad lot, these orphans, and worse than orphans, have been cast upon the Fatherhood of God. Notwithstanding all their wretchedness, He who cares for the sparrows cares for them, only he entrusts them to the charge, very much to the charge, of those who love and fear him. To you, he says virtually, as the daughter of Pharaoh said to the mother of Moses, "Take this child and nurse it for me—nurse it for my service, nurse it for my eternity, nurse it for my heaven, and I will give thee thy wages." And oh! it would ill become us to treat them with such cold and cruel negligence as to make it difficult for them to believe in God's paternal love. A gentleman near Edinburgh one day saw a boy with a bundle of sticks upon his back looking upon a number of lads who were engaged in games of various kinds, and the gentleman noticed that this poor lad sometimes looked sad and sorrowful, and sometimes laughed; so the gentleman said to him, "Well, my boy, why are you so sorrowful; why don't you lay down your sticks and join in the game?" "I was not thinking of the bundle, sir," said the boy, "I was not thinking of the sticks; I was thinking of what the good missionary told us the other day. You see, I don't go to church, sir; I have no clothes to go in; but the missionary comes to our stair once a week, and on Thursday, when he was there, he told us that though there are rich folks and there are poor folks in the world, yet we are all brothers. Now, sir, look at these lads, they have fine warm jackets on, and nice caps, and I have none, and I was just thinking it doesn't look like our all being brothers. They are flying their kite, and I am flying in my rags; they have plenty to eat, while I have an empty stomach; and my back is often like to break, and it doesn't look like our being brothers, sir." No, my lad, it does not look like it, and I would to God that Christian men and women to a larger extent had an earnest and practical sympathy with you, and would do something for you, and thus make you believe that we are all children of the same Father, and may yet dwell together in the same great and eternal home. Then, too, I have been impressed to-night with the feeling that this Ragged School Union is doing a most noble work, and that the success which has hitherto attended its efforts, proves how suitable are the means which it employs. There are too many instances of success which cannot appear in your Reports, and which one meets with from time to time. But the other day a northern minister told me of a boy, who was received into their School, ragged and dirty, and miserable, but who showed such docility of disposition, that a few friends provided for him a better education than the Ragged School supplied; he learnt quickly, and took the first prizes at school. He took the first prize at college, and is now an ordained minister of one of the churches in Scotland. Another case is that of a young girl, who was left without father or mother, and lived amongst godless relations. She was taken under the care of some Christian ladies, and profited by the instruction given her. She was, however, taken with a dangerous illness, and by her own request she was taken to her wretched home, that she might there speak to her brothers and sisters, and if possible influence them for good by her death. And such was her influence, that soon an outward reformation was observable in her brothers, and one of them gave strong signs of being a changed character. In her closing hours, she gave her Bible to one, and her hymn-book to another, and messages to all. She said to her sister, "Thank the good ladies for

me, and tell them I am not walking home, I am being carried through the valley of the shadow death; Christ in his gentle arms is bearing me along;" and shortly after she said, "Jesus, I am ready," and with those words her spirit passed away. One speaker has said that you cannot all make fortunes, and cannot all become eminent in literature, but you can all do something better than that. To train souls for their everlasting destiny is a grander work than to train a plant, or construct a railway, or paint a picture, or chisel a statue, or write a poem. He is creating for himself a loveliness more beautiful and enduring than either marble or music, and on which God and angels shall look with complacency and delight. Compare them with the scenes of butchery which were wont at festival seasons to be held in the Colosseum at Rome. Which think you is the more glorious—theirs or ours? I say that the Ragged School, as a testimony of national character, is a grander thing than the fairest sculpture ever produced, or the stateliest temple that ever glittered. To see your little, ragged, filthy, and untidy children clothed, and washed, and fed, and taught, singing the praises of Christ, is a grander thing, my lord, than a Homer celebrating the siege of Troy. The Ragged School Report is a better thing than an Iliad: it tells of bloodless victories over evil, of man and woman animated with the love of Christ rescuing those who are taken captive by the devil at his will. There is one thing in the Report which it is gratifying to see—that it is determined not to follow the advice of those false friends who would drive the Bible from the school. It seems a most strange thing, even upon philosophical grounds, that men should think of training human beings for their destiny, and altogether neglect religion, when the phenomena that surround us, and with all the teaching of experience, do we not see that this is the very strongest feeling of our nature? There is nothing by which the world is capable of being so deeply stirred, and on which it is so sensitive, as by its religious feeling; and it is known that the strongest combinations which, whether for good or evil, have ever been formed among men, have had their foundation in the excitement of religious feeling. Men are compelled to recognise this in their schemes; it enters into the calculations of the most infidel statesman; it is regarded by the most impudent usurper, who is glad, by doing its homage, to secure support, and the warrior knows its power is more than a host of armed men. You talk of training these souls for their moral duties, and leaving the most important part of their nature untouched. You may, by so doing, help them to pass their lives with a greater degree of comfort, but you don't satisfy their noblest cravings; you don't fit them for that destiny which is beyond this life. You have said, my lord, very truly, that the work of the Bible in such an institution as this is the best argument for the divinity of the Bible—the best proof you can have in support of it; and I do feel to employ the Bible in such work is far better than any argument of the evidences. There is one whose figure I quote, who compares the Bible to a harp, the merits and condition of which are being discussed; one says the frame is rotten, another that one of the strings is broken, a third, that they are both sound and serviceable; when an old harper takes the instrument, runs his fingers over the strings, evoking sounds of such unearthly sweetness, that every ear is strained to listen,—and so let your Christian labourers seize that harp of God's work—he may not have a very skilful hand, he may not have a very delicate touch, he may not have any learning, but that best of all learning which the gospel supplies—this harp emits no jarring sound; and when we see how youth listens with wonderment at its quaintness, and with the aged the tears stream down the face; and when we see how the heart of the strong man trembles, we cannot witness all this without feeling that these are significant

proofs of its divine origin. You will never, I trust, banish the Bible from your Schools; the day you do so there will be the great lamentation, Alas! alas! for the glory is departed.

Rev. B. PREECE moved: "That this meeting hopes the Committee will pursue the course they have so usefully continued up to this period, and pledges to use its influence to support the Committee in their efforts to extend and increase the efficiency of the Ragged School movement." He said that it is too late in the day to attempt an elaborate argument in defence of the Ragged School movement, especially when we meet to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary, and when it can adduce living facts for arguments, facts that not only indicate its large sphere of operation, and its manifold methods of working, but facts that also report its actual success. If interrogated by a sceptical man as to its merits or service, we may point to that Report and say, "It is of age, ask it, it can speak for itself." If we could imagine what would be the consequence of an immediate cessation of the Ragged School movement, I am sure that we should all feel at once that it is a national necessity; that under present circumstances, it is an essential part and parcel of our national life. The resolution speaks of the course that has been pursued by the Committee as a useful one. The object that has been pursued, then, has been no visionary Utopian sort of a thing, but something real, an object of which the most utilitarian spirit cannot complain, but an object which must commend itself even to his reason and judgment, and one of which he must approve. The spirit that reigns supreme in our day, as you know, is that of turning everything to good. But every new invention, every new commodity brought into the market, is felt to be a desideratum, and it soon becomes so incorporated with our domestic, social, and public life that it is felt to be a public necessity. Why, with the Ragged School movement, if we look at it from the lowest ground possible, we shall see that it is an agency that turns to some good account the very refuse and dregs of society, an agency that goes into the very gutter, as your lordship has said, and we cannot be too thankful to the great Father of all that he has endowed a band of men, with your lordship at their head, with the necessary wisdom, and tact, and energy, and piety necessary for the organisation and the successful working of such an agency. As an invention or a discovery the Ragged School Union is worthy not only to stand side by side, but to take the lead of the wonderful acquisitions of civilisation and art of which this present century can boast. It has solved the problem how the coarse, rough, unpromising materials which our juvenile portion of the poor supply is to be polished and cultivated. Many a ragged boy and girl who have once sunk deep in vice and crime and sin and depravity, who have been lost in the sea of degradation, and misery, and wretchedness, have been rescued by the loving, kind, and gentle influence of the Ragged School teachers—rescued and reclaimed; and every boy and every girl thus rescued, thus reclaimed, thus elevated, must be a moral and social gain to our nation. But I imagine the word useful as employed in the resolution is one of higher import. To gather boys and girls from the dirt and rags in which they have been trained, to teach them habits of cleanliness and decency, is a great thing; but to teach them the distinction between good and evil, right and wrong, is a still greater. But the object aimed at by the Committee is one still higher—still greater. It is to rescue young souls from the paths of vice and misery and perdition, and to turn their feet into the paths of holiness and happiness. If such has been the course which the Committee has pursued with such unflagging zeal in the past, surely you need no urging not only to accept but to redeem the pledge for which my resolution asks. Masters and employers of labour, the Ragged School Union has a claim upon you. Its teachers are

labouring for you. Many of these boys will by-and-by be found in your factories, in your shops. These teachers are labouring to instil into their minds right principles, and induce them to form right habits, that they may grow up sober, steady, industrious men. Brother ministers, the Ragged School movement has a claim upon you. Its teachers are labouring for you. Many of these boys and girls will soon be found in your churches, and they are labouring to acquaint these children with the glorious truths of the gospel, in order that they may become Christians of a higher stamp, with the ring of true piety heard in their hearts, and with the vital godliness found in their lives.

This resolution was seconded by Joseph Payne, Esq., who read the following tail-piece (No. 2482):—

Suggested by reading a paragraph to the effect that Ragged children, by educat on, go "*up the ladder*, step by step," to improvement.

"*Up the ladder*," round by round,
Ragged children go;
For the heights of pleasure bound,
From the depths of woe.

"*Up the ladder*," day by day,
Ragged *learners* climb—
Looking for "*the shining way*,"
To the heavens sublime.

"*Up the ladder*," week by week,
Earnest teachers mount;
Knowing that, for all they say,
They must give account.

"*Up the ladder*," year by year,
On *the Union* moves,
And its motives all sincere,
By its actions proves.

"*Up the ladder*," vigorous still,
Shaftesbury's Earl ascends;
Always "*working with a will*"
For his Ragged friends.

"*Up the ladder*," toiling hard,
Secretary Gent,
Wide awake, and on his guard,
Often makes th' ascent.

"*Up the ladder*," place to gain
Near his leader's side,
Shaftesbury's *follower*, Joseph Payne,
Makes his aim and pride.

"*Up the ladder*," at the last,
Such as *Jacob* saw;
Both to earth and heaven made fast
We our feet must draw.

And when all its steps are trod,
Ragged children see,
"*Up the ladder*," safe with God,
Through Eternity!

It was then resolved, on the motion of Thomas Wright, the prison philanthropist, seconded by Robert Barnes, Esq., President of the Manchester Ragged School Union, "That a petition to the House of Commons, against the rating of Ragged School buildings, be adopted, and that the same be signed, on behalf of this meeting, by the chairman.

It was then resolved, on the motion of Captain Eastwick, seconded by Rev. Newman Hall, LL.B., "That the most hearty thanks of this meeting are due and are hereby offered to their noble Chairman, Lord Shaftesbury, for his presiding this evening; and this meeting cannot separate before recording expressions of thanks to the Divine Master for permitting his servant, for a full quarter of a century, to preside over the interests of this movement.

Papers, Original and Selected.

THE GOSPEL IN SPAIN.

MADRID RAGGED SCHOOL.

NEXT to Italy, no country for many generations was so closed to the gospel as Spain. As the result, a nation which once held almost sovereign sway on the continent had sunk so low as to be all but blotted out of the European system. Ruled for centuries by kings who were merely deputies of the Pope, and at length by a queen the vileness of whose domestic life was alone equalled by her grovelling superstition—it seemed as if that unhappy country was as much doomed as the Cities of the Plain.

But, happily, the wondrous revolution of last winter has given renewed life to this noble people; and we may hope that, with gospel light and the general spread of education, Spain will before long resume its ancient glories. So far, indeed, as respects gospel preaching, the events of the last six months read more like a chapter in a romance than as facts in current history. Who twelve months ago could have imagined that the gospel would so soon have been publicly preached in Madrid, and that by converted Spaniards; or that the Bible would be exposed for sale in the market-places of that capital? Or, stranger than all, that a Ragged School should now be at work to socialise and to save its juvenile pariahs? Yet we find that in Madrid alone above 200,000 Gospels have been already sold; and about 500,000 Protestant tracts have been distributed. More than this, as showing the depth of the religious feeling, above 1,000 persons listen earnestly to the preached word in Madrid alone, and above 100 have partaken of the Lord's Supper according to the Protestant rite in that city. The gospel movement has extended to Seville, where there are 200 Spanish communicants, Malaga, Cordova, Saragossa, and other large towns. In addition, as showing the source of the movement and the power which has attended it, seven Prayer Meetings are daily held in the capital, the prayer leaders being mostly Spaniards; some of them converted priests. Contrasting, then, the spiritual life of 1869 with

the lethargy of 1868, we think that these facts present a striking illustration of the doctrine of our Lord, "With God all things are possible."

Italy and Spain are not only the most priest-ridden countries of Europe, but they are also the most uneducated. Nor is this strange; for, as in both countries the priests taught that "ignorance is the mother of devotion," they necessarily regarded education as their direst foe. The Bible, too, was a shut book; the priests themselves knowing little of it save the parts found in their Breviary. When men, like the great modern confessor Matamoros, dared to read it or expound it to their circle, a dungeon rewarded their temerity. But the bulk of the population, young or old, could not have read the sacred book, even if it had been placed in their possession, for few knew even the letters of the alphabet. But, in all cases, whether priest or layman, the possession of a Bible was regarded as a State crime, little short of treason; and if such culprits were not burnt as in olden times, it was simply because this age will not allow of an *auto da fé*, and so the crafty priesthood and a besotted queen preferred to "wear out the saints" with hourly persecution.

But happily this evil system has come to an end with a celerity which has startled Europe. The Cortes have not only placed liberty of conscience among the provisions of the new Constitution, but, in order that the new generation may use this liberty aright, the Government has introduced a Bill for the education of the poorer classes. By this Bill every commune of from 500 to 2,000 inhabitants will be required to keep a mixed Day School. Towns with a population of above 2,000 will be required to keep at least two distinct Schools for each sex. Villages containing less than 500 persons will not be overlooked, as is too often the case in England, but will be grouped into educational districts. This Bill solves the vexed question of compulsory education, not by forcing it on the unwilling, but by declaring that no one who cannot read or write shall be eligible for State employment.

It is pleasing to find that our Spanish brethren have not fallen into the glaring error of some English "Revivalists;" namely, that of confining their efforts to adults, especially in the form of public preaching. "Feed my *lambs*," is as much a command as "Feed my *sheep*;" and he who is loyal to his Divine Master will not ignore the former, and restrict himself to the latter form of service. We are glad, then, to find that some Spanish Protestants

are not only thinking about the best plans of training the young for Jesus, but have introduced the God-honoured scheme of Sunday Schools. Seville, where the largest number of converts reside, has had the honour of initiating this system. This, the first Sabbath School in Spain, was opened on March 7th, in a building whose walls enclose the site of the old *autos da fé* of Seville, and contain the ashes of the martyrs of three centuries. There were about seventy-five scholars present, not one of whom had ever heard a Sunday School hymn. They were taught "Happy day, happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away," and the words and tune took like magic. A few months ago such a meeting would have been broken up, and all the adults taken to prison, with the parents of many of the children. The School now numbers no less than 200. Preparations are making to inaugurate Sunday Schools in Madrid, Malaga, Cordova, and other places.

We are glad, too, to find that our Spanish brethren have gone still lower down into this moral mine, so long unworked; for Madrid has just introduced the British plan of meeting the social and spiritual needs of their waifs and strays. Nor can Ragged Schools be regarded merely as an exotic in Spain; for what European city is there—be it Protestant or Romanist—which has not its social pariahs? Probably of no country is this truer than of Spain, for there especially the heights of grandeur are tracked by the deep shadows of poverty and crime. We are glad, then, to record that in Madrid a boys' Ragged School has just been established with signal success. On Sunday they are formed into a regular Sunday School; and on week days they are taught the elements of secular knowledge. As in London, these Schools have called out much voluntary agency; and the destitute are fed and clad. A Mothers' Meeting is also about to be organised, and also a Young Men's Meeting.

Preaching to classes akin to those which are reached by our Ragged Churches also forms part of the operations of this, the first Spanish Ragged School. Thus the Madrid bids fair to become the model Ragged School of Spain; and we trust that its success will lead to the establishment of similar Schools in all the large towns of Spain.

One feature of the Madrid Ragged School is too special to be omitted—namely, how the "service of song" is employed to get and keep the scholars. No one can read the history of the Reformation without seeing that it was not so much the writings or the preaching of Luther as his hymns which made the Reformation

in Germany. Copying this example, the founder of the Madrid Ragged School has introduced the tonic sol-fa system into this and similar Schools. Two nights weekly are devoted to hymn-singing on this system, and the mission-room is crowded whilst they sing the hymns so popular in British Ragged Schools. These hymns they sing in groups in the foul alleys of Madrid, and thus make them vocal with holy song. What the children learn in the Ragged School they sing at home; and as a fruit many of their parents have been delivered from Mariolatry—the real religion of Spain—and now attend worship in the mission-hall.

As yet little has been done for the poor girls of Spain. In fact, so difficult is it to reach the females, that of the 1,000 who form the congregation of the largest Protestant Chapel in Madrid, the bulk are men. But we trust that our friends, so soon as funds will permit, will so enlarge their operations as to include poor girls. As the future mothers of Spain, they will more than their husbands make the Spain of the future. One striking case gives every encouragement thus to train poor girls for Jesus as well as poor boys. The gentleman who has so successfully introduced Curwen's hymns into the Madrid Ragged Schools obtained access into an asylum of orphans or otherwise destitute girls, founded by a warm-hearted man, and sustained by himself and a number of ladies, all devoted Romanists. Introduced one day to the School, Mr. A— was pained by the character of the singing, on the "ten mortal sins." His offer "to teach them better how to sing the praises of God" was accepted. Every afternoon he goes to his class of affectionate girls, who already sing in happy harmonies of their tender Saviour and his boundless love; and thus they sing the same Revival hymns, with the very same tunes, which are so popular in our Ragged Schools.

Nor are the industrial pursuits of these poor boys overlooked. For example, the newspaper boys of Madrid form a conspicuous figure in its boy-life, and, like our newspaper boys, they are exposed to all the evils incident to street life.

Each boy has a *café* under his special charge, and on a table at the door he displays his newspapers and periodicals. A correspondent of the National Bible Society of Scotland has, as a trial, given one of the boys a supply of Gospels for sale in this way. He says: "I have taken up one newsboy of confidence, who has the vending of papers in the Café de V. Of course I could employ any number, but I must feel my way and be guided by experience. This lad

has just left me, after having recited a verse of Scripture containing a word of prayer, which he learned the other day. To-day he has learned a fresh verse to say as he goes on his sales. He began with 50 Gospels, for which I charge him four reals; he next took 250; and to-day came back for 100. I give him tracts besides, gratis, to hand to those who buy of him."

These and similar facts show how much Spanish Christians are doing to win the young—the future fathers of Spain—for Jesus. We are sure that our readers will not only deeply sympathise with this effort to cure the Peninsula of the Roman malaria, but will uphold the evangelists and teachers by their prayers. That this may be done many British Christians have set apart a portion of Sunday morning, from seven till eight, for special prayer for Spain. Thus those who cannot personally aid this great work, can have a share in gospelising a noble people. For if preaching and teaching reaches the *ear* of man, prayer alone reaches Him whose province it is to reach the *heart*. Hence in the sequel it may be found that such prayer was the appointed means of conferring on regenerated Spain the liberty wherewith Christ makes free.

THE GLORY THAT SHALL FOLLOW.

BY THE REV. C. FOWLER.

Look at that stone-cutter yonder in the vaults and passages under old Jerusalem. Days and weeks he works away with chisel and mallet, simply working the stone into a shape mapped out on the pattern before him. He does not know where it is to go. He only knows its shape. But by-and-by it is done. It is carried away to its place. His work is finished. He lays down his tools, brushes the chips out of his hair and beard, and starts for his home.

He comes up the stone stairway into the very summit of Mount Moriah, and lo, before his wondering Hebrew eyes looms up the temple of Jehovah. He looks in rapt amazement at the columns, and caps, and aisles, and vast apartments. It is the great day of dedication. The high priest and king are there. He beholds the sacred vestments and the royal robes. On bended knees in the praying throng he watches the priest as the prayers are said and the incense offered, when, lo, the light kindles on the incense and fills the temple with the glory of God. In the brightness of the glory he looks about, and there in the very archway, just over the way to the mercy-seat, is the stone into which he wrought his time and strength. 'Tis enough. The vaults are forgotten. The weariness is gone. There, in the temple of Israel's God, on the very way to the mercy-seat, is the monument of his skill and faithfulness to abide for ever, and all generations shall bless the workman.

We are building larger than we know. We are in the vaults of time, under the new Jerusalem, hewing and chiselling at the rude blocks that come to our hands. We do not know what shall come of this work. We only know the pattern and the work. Soon, brothers, it will be over. Soon we can lay aside the mallet and the chisel; soon we can brush the dust of time from our eyes, and rise, on the coronation day of the King's Son, to behold our work, to see that we have been working on the temple of our God, fashioning the living block.

When we look about us yonder and see there, in the very way of life, hard by the throne, those little ones upon whom we have expended our years, and into whom we have wrought our strength, it will be glory enough to behold then the everlasting monument of our faithfulness wrought into the very likeness of Him that sitteth upon the throne, while the King shall say, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

OLD CASTLE STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

Bethnal Green is so well known that it seems superfluous to give any further description of it. Its tales of poverty, sin, drunkenness, and misery are so familiar as to almost lose their power either to interest or excite compassion in the minds of the general public, except when some story of want and woe, more than usually painful, or the narration in the daily papers of "a family starved to death," horrify the reader for a moment, but only to leave the reflection on the mind that things always will be so, and it is little use troubling oneself about what cannot be helped. But God's people cannot so easily dismiss the subject from their minds. Tens of thousands of dying souls in this and all East-end parishes, are crying for help. Matters are not on the mend, but are daily growing worse: Christian effort has not overtaken the march of sin; opposition to the gospel in every form increases, especially in the form of utter apathy and indifference to its claims; and in this mighty, poverty-stricken parish of 180,000 souls, but an infinitesimal portion know or care anything about the great salvation, or have any idea of the way to the better life.

During the summer of 1867 it was deeply impressed on the mind of Mr. Jarvis to make an evangelistic effort in some place where the gospel was but little known. After searching for several days, a large workshop presented itself as a suitable spot for the work. After consulting with others, and seeking the Lord's guidance, the place was taken, and opened on September 1, the leading thought then being to gather in the adults from the surrounding back streets and courts.

For the time, failing in arresting the adults, children flocked to the meetings, often to our annoyance, as we feared it kept the adults away; and it became a question whether to refuse to admit any, in the thought that by so doing the meetings might gradually improve. Finding the children continued anxious to attend, two meetings were held weekly, and the hall was also opened two other evenings as a Night School. The meetings were well

attended, and deep impressions made upon many. From time to time the heart was rejoiced by seeing one and another broken down, and professedly yielding their hearts to the Lord. These meetings have been continued up to the present time on Monday and Wednesday evenings—the former as a Children's Service, the latter as a Band of Hope.

These poor children demand our deepest sympathy, and we must be slow to condemn, even though our hopes are often disappointed. No one knows, but those who have worked among them, how hard it is for them to keep steadfast, or to honestly follow out their convictions, when aroused to a sense of their need of Jesus. The whole family often living in one room—the majority unable to read—reviled and abused by drunken fathers when they evince any desire for better things—it is a miracle of grace when they are kept from falling.

The following instances will show the force of our remark. One girl—a wild, rough girl—a regular attendant, said, "It's no use me being religious while my father abuses me, and my brothers curse me and kick me about." Another said, "I can't be a Christian when there's nothing at home to make me one; if father and mother were converted, then I might be." A little girl was broken down in uncontrollable sorrow at one of Miss McPherson's tea-meetings of the Girls' Industrial Society: two evenings after she professed to find Jesus. After a time we missed her from School, and sought her, and heard a tale which curdled the blood. Was it any wonder the little one had her earnestness damped? Another said, "My father is always drunk. He hates me coming here. I always have to come unbeknown to him." Two others, companions, we have every reason to believe, earnestly sought and found the Saviour. Troubles and opposition at home quenched their ardour, and now, in a despairing state, they still continue to attend, as if drawn by an irresistible impulse.

The ignorance in this neighbourhood is fearful. It is no exaggeration to say not one person in twenty can read. Among the elder girls and boys who came at first to our meetings, it was lamentable to find not one in twelve could spell the simpleat word. In the hope of removing some of the ignorance, at least among the younger children, and at the same time of reaching the hearts of the parents through them, a free Day School was opened, and we engaged a Christian young woman as teacher; the number commencing with thirty. The room is now crammed every day but Saturday with over 200 poor children, and this number is only limited by want of more room and comfort.

The master of this School thus writes:—

"Dear Sir,—A twelvemonth has now elapsed since I began my labour for the Lord, in trying to impart secular as well as spiritual knowledge to the children in the Free School, under your superintendence, and I can say that the Lord has blessed us greatly, in point of numbers, during that time—the number on our books being 250, and our average daily attendance from 200 to 220 — but the numbers are limited; having been obliged to turn many away through want of room, we are, if I may so speak, entirely crammed. And not only do I labour under the inconvenience of want of room, but the apparatus that I have to work with is entirely inadequate, my stock of school

materials, which was never very great, being nearly all worn out; and being, as you know, without an assistant, it is impossible to impart, through want of the necessary means, that instruction to the children which I should like, and which they so much need. The ignorance prevailing amongst them is inconceivable, numbers among them, ranging from ten to twelve years of age, not knowing their alphabet. Never, in my whole experience of teaching, have I had to deal with such vice and immorality as there is existing amongst the children at Bethnal Green; but that is not so much to be wondered at, when we look around and see the iniquity by which they are surrounded—in many cases their own homes are nothing less than hotbeds of sin and vice. I often ask myself the question, Who is sufficient for these things? But I look to the Lord for help and strength, knowing that He is *all sufficient*, and I pray the time may soon come when the Lord shall give us more commodious premises, and send in the required means, not only to gather in many more of the outcasts of Bethnal Green, but to alleviate their temporal necessities, many of them existing on one meal a day, and thus to enable us in some measure to stem the torrent of iniquity running so swiftly through our streets. The late rains have put me to great inconvenience, for in no place are we entirely waterproof, and in many places the rain comes through without let or hindrance. Truly we are amongst the Lord's needy ones."

The Sunday School, which commenced at the same time as the Children's Meetings, has steadily maintained its numbers, varying from 100 to 150. Though in a neighbourhood like this Sunday School scholars are constantly changing, we have a great number who have continued with us from the commencement, and evince the greatest interest in the success of the work. On a recent Sunday, when asked how many of them would pray for the Lord to give us a better room to meet in, a shower of hands were held up, and many of the elder ones have commenced subscribing their pennies and halfpennies every Sunday to help on our object. We have eleven regular teachers, five of whom God has saved at our meetings.

During the last winter we were liberally assisted, by the East London Mission and Relief Society, with funds to carry on a Sewing Class among the distressed mothers, of whom we gathered between 50 and 60 daily, and mostly gave a gospel address. From these poor mothers the nucleus of our Adult Services was formed. A few, whose hearts the Lord has touched, remained with us after the Sewing Class was dismissed, and induced others to come with them. The attendance at the services on Sunday and Thursday evenings, considering the difficulties we labour under, in an ill-ventilated room, with damp walls through a leaky roof, and the rain pouring through in wet weather, is very encouraging, as none will come but those who have some concern for their souls, though numbers promise to attend when we have a comfortable room. The Lord has greatly blessed the testimony of His own truth; souls have been converted, we trust but an earnest of the coming blessing.

SCHOOL AGENT'S WORK,—WEST AND SOUTH.

From Mr. Hytche's Fifteenth Annual Report we make the following extracts, to show the nature of the work and the state of the Schools under his visitation:—

In the West and South there are 78 institutions. In addition, in the autumn I visited the five Ragged Schools planted in Brentford, Croydon, Tottenham, and Woolwich, and made various suggestions, which were cordially received.

During the past year I paid the following

VISITS.

Sunday Schools	71
Day Schools	351
Night Schools	201
Special Business and Conferences	80
Local Committees	11
Public and Social Meetings	24
Parents' Meetings	15
	753

The aspect of many districts has so much changed as scarcely to be recognised. Nor, were it not for the injury thereby done to the destitute classes, would this be any evil, as their general sanitary condition has been much improved. The districts most affected are Lambeth, where, in order to erect the southern embankment of the Thames, the main part of the houses between Bishop's Walk and Vauxhall Bridge have been pulled down. So the railways in Westminster and Notting Hill have removed nests of alleys and hovels known by the general name of "Rookeries." But, unhappily, these improvements have caused the poor who remained in the district to crowd into hovels already overcrowded, so that these hovels have become more than ever fever dens.

One institution was added to your list last year, namely, *Little James Street*, Lisson Grove. This School includes Sunday and Week Night Schools, Penny Bank, Mothers' Meetings, and Ragged Church. By the influence of your Agent a Sunday Night School was added.

The following is a list of last year's extensions, namely, 5 Sunday Schools, 5 Night Schools, 5 Penny Banks, 3 Clothing Clubs, 1 Sick Club, 7 Parents' Meetings, and 6 Bands of Hope. It thus appears that 32 operations were added last year. Of these 27 were in old institutions.

The number of distinct operations conducted in the two divisions are as follows:—

Sunday Schools, Afternoon and Evening	93
Day Schools	75
Night Schools	91
Boys' Industrial Classes	10

Girls' Industrial Classes	5
Penny and Farthing Banks	36
Clothing and Provident Clubs	46
Parents' Meetings	36
Ragged Churches, &c.	42
Infants' Nurseries	2
Bands of Hope	17
	502

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

are conducted by 69 institutions. In addition, ordinary Sunday Schools are conducted in three buildings used as Ragged Schools on week nights. Of these Sunday Schools 26 meet in the morning, and are attended by 1,452 scholars. The 48 which meet in the afternoon are attended by 5,306, and the 45 which assemble in the evening are attended by about 7,000.

The present number of voluntary teachers is 1,350. But as about 150 only profess to teach in Week Day or Night Schools, the real number of Sunday teachers is 1,200. Of these the average Sunday attendance is 960.

As one means of obtaining more teachers, Ogle Mews and George Street Sunday Schools held social meetings for this purpose. Agent, who addressed both meetings, is glad to say that, as a result, both Schools obtained 20 teachers, and thus these old and valuable Schools have resumed their ancient vigour.

The bulk of the day scholars attend some Sunday School, chiefly the connected one. But my private questionings during October and December showed that out of 1,457 elder scholars, 274 did not attend any Sunday School. Some said that they "had to mind baby;" others that they "went for a walk;" and many more that they had "no clothes" or "boots." In concert, however, with the pay teachers, I used my influence—speaking to each non-attendant privately—to induce them to attend some Sunday School, and in most cases with success.

Most Sunday Schools are well disciplined; some, indeed, are in this respect beyond all praise. In fact, a good superintendent can, as a rule, compel order, whether the staff be large or small.

From our senior Bible Classes substitute teachers are often appointed, when the staff is too small. Of these classes there are 19, 8 of these being for boys. These classes number about 350 members. Some members are under deep religious conviction, and hence, when placed in charge of a class, they display an earnest missionary spirit, which has a reflex influence even on the regular teachers. So important are these senior classes, that no Sunday School can be regarded as perfect which is without this machinery. The great difficulty is to find separate rooms, which is essential to their success. Thus out of the 69 buildings devoted to Ragged Sunday Schools, 45 are without class-rooms. In these cases, however, movable dwarf screens might be employed, and thus most of the benefits of a separate class-room would be obtained at a small cost.

I think that it would be beneficial if a Special Service were held in the Sunday Night Schools at the commencement of October. In such cases,

three addresses, each followed by prayer and "Revival" hymns, might be given, without exceeding the time usually devoted to teaching. As I took part in such a service at the opening of the winter session of Exeter Buildings, I can bear witness to the great interest shown by the whole School, and of the stimulus it gave to the teachers.

About 50 Sunday Schools statedly conduct Prayer Meetings, the bulk of the teachers remaining. In some cases the elder scholars are invited to attend, and their behaviour is all that can be wished. In addition to this, a few teachers meet their classes for private prayer on one week night, the scholars praying without being called on by name. In connection with this subject, it may be intimated that some teachers converse and pray with the members of their classes separately in rotation. As this plan has been much blessed in bringing children under conviction to *a point*, its general adoption is suggested.

DAY SCHOOLS

are conducted by 51 Institutions. They may be thus classified:—44 Mixed Schools, 9 Boys' Schools, 8 Girls' Schools, and 14 Infant Schools, giving a total of 75 distinct Day Schools. The number on the register is 9,743. The average attendance is about 8,000. 84 Secular and 6 Industrial teachers are employed in the Day Schools.

During the past year I strictly examined the class admitted. Thus my journal shows that 67 cases in 16 Day Schools were examined by your Agent, of whom 36 were excluded. This makes 212 cases personally investigated during the past 3 years, of whom 80 were at once excluded, as above the class. Two cases may be mentioned where the *whole* School was thus tested last year by the teachers in concert with Agent. I refer to Lower Park Road and York Mews. The result was that 24 scholars were excluded in the two Schools, the whole of whom there is reason to believe went to National Schools.

In 23 Day Schools 180 Paid Monitors are employed. The care of the Infants—seven of these being in separate rooms—usually devolves on them. They all receive daily training lessons. The bulk are remarkable for their kindness, power of management, and general good conduct.

My editorial duties again precluded a formal examination of the Day Schools. From October to December, too, I heard all the monitors and first and second classes read. Of the 1,457 who thus read, 650 read well.

NIGHT SCHOOLS

are held by 60 Institutions. They are divisible into 25 Mixed, 32 Boys', and 34 Girls' Night Schools. This makes an aggregate of 91 Night Schools. The number on the register is 5,200. The nightly attendance is 3,530. Fifty-nine Secular and 3 Industrial teachers are employed. Eight of these Night Schools are aided by voluntary teachers. Fourteen Night Schools are conducted solely by volunteers. This shows that 38 Institutions, or nearly two-thirds, are without any voluntary aid. This not only restricts the number in attendance, but too often it causes the teachers to expend their energies in keeping down the rougher elements, instead of devoting their whole time to teaching. Nor can another defect be omitted, namely, that it

is only when there is a large staff of volunteers, as at Maida Hill, Victoria Place, Peckham, and Marigold Street, that the Night School becomes a missionary power in the district.

On the whole, the order of Night Schools was better than I have known it for some seasons; not that the scholars are of a higher social grade than formerly, but the "roughs" who attended have not come usually for a "lark." The Schools have, however, been more molested by lads *outside* than I have known for some years. The following extracts from my diary will give some idea of the annoyances to which many of our Night Schools are subject:—1. *Druid Street.* A large number of young gamblers were outside cursing and fighting. They threw mud at the scholars as they entered, and tried to break open the door. 2. *Harrow Street.* The door was bolted to keep out the juvenile "roughs," who threw mud and stones at the windows. It was above ten minutes before I was admitted, as they threatened to stone the master. 3. *Gravel Lane.* A large number of juvenile thieves and young harlots kept running up the stone stairs, shouting and stamping. In this case Agent, by speaking to the group outside, eventually succeeded in inducing them to go away. 4. *Cottage Place.* The roughs outside pelted the windows with mud. They also tried to break open the door. Agent had to leave the School several times to remonstrate. This scene occurs almost every night this School is open. 5. *Amicable Row.* Groups of young thieves tried to smash in door. Whenever the door was opened, pieces of granite were thrown in, one of which nearly knocked down master and Agent. 6. *Moreton Street.* Whenever the door was opened young harlots rushed up-stairs, swearing and using obscene language. 7. *Bell Street.* There were a large number of lads outside shouting and kicking at the door. They insulted and tore the dresses of girls as they entered. It tasked the strength of the two female teachers and Agent to protect these girls from violence. In this case a policeman at last interfered, but not till I threatened to give them in charge.

All these cases, and they might be multiplied, show that some protection ought to be given by the police. If we can manage those inside, surely the police ought to keep the young thieves and harlots outside in order; seeing that they not only annoy our scholars, but disturb the whole district.

By way of increasing the attendance, the master of Green Street teaches singing, and instructs a Drum and Fife Band. The master of Moreton Street reads some interesting book to the boys for half an hour on Fridays. The master of Doughty Street teaches drawing from models for one hour twice a week. The master of Nelson Street permits young men, chiefly Irish labourers, to read books by the fireside. All these various plans of usefulness are much prized, and might be adopted in other districts with much benefit. Though not professedly of a missionary character, they have undoubtedly raised the moral tone of the whole School, and made them more popular in the district.

INDUSTRIAL CLASSES.

In my district there are ten Boys' Industrial Classes, with about 150 members. Tailoring, knitting, shoe-making, wood-chopping, and mat-making are the branches taught. They are taught by 9 pay teachers and by 2 volunteers. If ladies would take charge of a boys' class one afternoon per

week, cap-making and clothes-mending might be readily introduced with little expense.

In 54 GIRLS' Industrial Classes there are 2,500 members. Of these classes 15 meet in the evening, and are very serviceable to the elder girls. I think, indeed, that when Girls' Night Schools meet four times weekly, one evening at least ought to be devoted to needlework. To render it more attractive, a lady might read whilst the girls are working. I doubt not that many elder girls would be induced to attend.

SANITARY.

Probably in no respect has my visitation proved of more service than as respects the sanitary state of the School; and, in some cases, I might say to the district. Some of the most glaring evils are beyond the reach of the School managers, although the health of the teachers and scholars is seriously affected. Thus on one occasion the stench from the skin-driers' in the rear was so abominable, that the Sunday School teachers of Butler's Place were compelled to rush out in a body and close the School. Impure, then, as the air is inside some of our Schools, it cannot be compared with the mal-odours outside. In the cases of Princes Street and Lant Street, the bad smells come from candle or soap factories. The Schools in Gray's Yard, Crescent Place, and George Street, suffer from their proximity to stables or slaughter-houses.

During the past year Church Street School was rebuilt. The School in Henry Street was enlarged to nearly two-thirds its former area, on a plan suggested by your Agent. The School in Church Place, Paddington, had another room added for separate instruction of the Mixed School. Surrey Row rented a room holding about 50 in the same spot for its Bible Class and Mothers' Meetings. By these means, above 400 more scholars can be accommodated.

PENNY BANKS AND CLOTHING CLUBS.

In my district there are 36 Penny and Farthing Banks. There are also 44 Clothing Clubs. In addition, Church Place and Linton Place have large and well-worked Provident and Burial Clubs, chiefly for male adults.

The largest Banks are planted in Harrow Street and Robert Street. They are, in fact, the Savings' Banks of these districts. The depositors are chiefly fish hawkers and costermongers. In many cases they have led to such an improvement in these dissipated classes that they now send their children to Pay Schools of a superior character.

PARENTS' MEETINGS

may be divided into two classes, namely, the Parents' Meetings of a semi-secular character, and the Ragged Church. In my district there are 36 Parents' Meetings, with about 1,000 members. There are also 42 Ragged Church and Mission Services, the aggregate attendance at which is about 1,500. Both these movements I have fostered by advice and personal services; and many are the results of Agent's suggestion. Three Ragged Churches are worthy of notice of bringing home the gospel to special classes.

Thus the Coburg Row School has a service in the Welsh language every Sunday evening. Pear Street School is attended by many of the blind of that district. Bell Street is much attended by cabmen, it being the head-quarters of their club.

INFANT NURSERIES.

There are two Infants' Nurseries in my district, namely, Church Place and Henry Street. In both infants are received for twelve hours daily, whilst the mothers are at work away from home. For a small sum the infants are provided with a cheerful and healthy home, and are properly nursed. During the past year the Church Place Nursery received 2,191 infants, being a weekly average of 42. The total expenses were £28 10s., of which sum the mothers contributed £19 15s. 9d.

BANDS OF HOPE.

There are 17 Bands of Hope in my district, with about 1,500 members. The Hinde's Mews friends have engaged the sympathies of the parents in favour of this movement by not permitting any one to sign the pledge without the sanction of their parents. So, at Lant Street, I have never visited it without finding many adults present; and thus this Band of Hope has had a salutary influence on a peculiarly gin-drinking district.

OLD SCHOLARS' MEETINGS.

Some of the older Schools have invited former scholars to a Social Meeting. At the one held in New Tothill Street about 100 were present; and to that at Church Place above 250 were invited. In the course of conversation it was elicited that some were members of various churches; that a few were Sunday School teachers; and that some dated their after conversion to the old School. It would be well if all our larger Schools had a similar gathering in winter, for not only would it tend to keep up a connection between the teachers and their old scholars, but it might be the means of awakening or of deepening religious impressions.

LIBRARIES

are attached to 32 Schools. In connection with this effort, Ogle Mews sells various juvenile magazines. In all cases they act as a silent protest against that juvenile thieves' literature which is now training so large a portion of youth—as well females as males—for a life of crime. As no one is eligible for the Library who is not regular in attendance and well behaved, it also serves as a means of discipline, the value of which cannot be exaggerated.

CHILDREN'S DINNERS.

This movement has been carried on in Gray's Yard School during winter for above 17 years. But it has recently been extended to many other Schools by the aid of the "Children's Dinner Society," the plan being first and most successfully, tried in New Tothill Street and Turk's Row Schools. All the teachers of the Schools thus benefited testify to the good effect these meat dinners have had on the behaviour of the scholars. In addition to the striking effect they have had on the physical condition of the children, it has

subdued that restlessness and fretfulness which as often sprung from semi-starvation as from natural bad temper.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES.

In most Ragged Schools the morning Sunday Schools fail in attracting an attendance at all proportionate to those registered the other portions of the Lord's day. Thus it appears that in the morning Sunday Schools the average attendance is only 56, whilst in the afternoon the average is 110, and in the evening 144. To meet this need a few Schools hold a Children's Service; some in addition, and others in lieu, of a Sunday Morning School. This plan has three advantages. 1. As the Children's Service does not begin until about an hour and a half after the usual time of commencing Sunday Morning Schools, elder scholars, who have home duties, can easily attend. 2. This Service only requires the attendance of two teachers, each alternately preserving order and officiating. 3. The Service is more suitable to the bulk of the scholars than those more elaborate forms which are fitted to meet the spiritual needs of adults.

SUMMARY.

In conclusion, I would refer to some few cases where my suggestions have been found beneficial.

I. *Henry Street.*—This School was so overcrowded that the school-room averaged above one-third more than was proper. Agent advised that the partitions between the passage should be removed, so as to throw the two rooms and passage into one. By this plan 150 scholars can be accommodated instead of 60, and the school-room looks more cheerful from the increased light.

II. *Victoria Place, Borough.*—This School was fast losing its former vigour. At a special committee, Agent's suggestions were adopted. A new master was appointed; the Sunday Night School, which was often closed, is now always open; the Week Night School does not close before 9, instead of at 8, as formerly; and all children who attend Day Schools are now excluded.

III. *Little James Street.*—A Sunday Night School has been added. As the Committee were disinclined to close the "Ragged Church," Agent advised that it should not begin till a later hour, so as to permit a Sunday Night School being previously held. This has been done, and the elder scholars are invited to attend the Ragged Church, which has thereby increased above one-third.

IV. *Church Place.*—This Week Night School was changed into a penny-a-week School. As Agent intimated would be the case, three-fourths immediately left the School; and even from those who remained, the fee was obtained with difficulty. By the advice of Agent, the free plan was reverted to this winter, and the attendance has resumed its former average.

V. *Lower Park Road.*—As many of the scholars were obviously above the class, Agent requested the new teacher to dismiss some, which was readily done. In addition, the status of the whole Day School was tested, when 12 were dismissed, all of whom went to National Schools. No child is now admitted without strict examination, or home visitation.

VI. *Hill Street.*—The Boys' Day and Night Schools were almost a failure,

thereby offering a great contrast to the Girls' branches, which were very successful. Both Schools were placed in the charge of the mistress and a female assistant by Agent's advice: and since that time the attendance of boys has more than doubled. A Mothers' Meeting has also been commenced.

VII. *George Street.*—The staff in this, one the oldest Institutions, had so much decreased, that the propriety of closing the Sunday School was under consideration. Agent, to avert this calamity, advised that a conference of teachers and friends should be held. This advice being adopted, Agent, by request of Committee, presided at that meeting. As a result, twenty efficient teachers at once proffered their services, and thereby this valuable Sunday School was saved from extinction.

VIII. I aided several night teachers in controlling the "roughs" outside. They so molested the girls and the better principled boys that they feared to enter; and not rarely they pelted the masters. In each case Agent left the School and remonstrated with the boys outside, especially with the ringleaders. They usually went away after some parleying, shouting as they left, "All right, governor!"

IX. Personally investigated 67 doubtful cases in 16 Day Schools. Sometimes Agent sent for the mother, and at other times the teacher visited the homes. As the result of the examination, 36 were excluded, and many applicants were refused.

In Memoriam.

WILLIAM FRENCH, ESQ.

THE School in Victoria Place, Southwark, has lost a devoted friend by the death of Mr. French, of Messrs. Barclay and Perkins's Brewhouse. He was one of its earliest and warmest supporters. This estimable man, spared to the ripe age of eighty-two years, "feared the Lord from his youth," and was a pattern to all of faithful and diligent service in the work of Christ until called to his heavenly rest. His active love for the low-sunk portion of the children of the poor showed itself at the commencement of his public life, when he walked to and from Eltham every Lord's day to teach in a Sunday School; and afterwards, when living at Peckham, he walked to Deptford every Sunday morning, and remained there till night, with no other refreshment but what he carried in his pocket, in order to instruct, with others whom he called to his aid, the poor children of that neglected locality. The work was so difficult, from the behaviour of the scholars, that he was often urged to abandon it; but he kept to his post of duty with a cheerful perseverance.

Mr. French had his reward in a remarkable deathbed scene of one of his scholars. She was a girl of a very perverse spirit, rendered more difficult of control by a weakness of intellect, and her conduct was so bad that she was

often put out of the room. But her kind teacher would not give her up, and the result showed how rightly he estimated the duty of a Christian labourer under the greatest discouragements. She was seized with an illness which carried her off so quickly that, although she wished to see him, the communication did not reach him until she had expired. But her end witnessed to the power of what she had been taught. To the surprise of those around her, her intellectual weakness disappeared, and then she spoke with great earnestness of her sins and her Saviour, and besought her parents to embrace Him who had been revealed to her own soul. Her death was so triumphant that it afforded her patient instructor the greatest joy; and he never ceased afterwards to look upon the most unpromising child with a feeling of interest and hope.

On the night of the opening of the St. Saviour's Ragged School he was the first to welcome the tattered and rough scholars, one of whom particularly engaged his attention, and so won his sympathy that he took him in hand, and bestowed special pains upon his instruction. The little vagrant boy soon read sufficiently well to be advanced to the clothed school of the parish; he was afterwards sent to sea, but subsequently became a Horse Artilleryman at Woolwich, and recently from the plains of India he has written letters to his mother expressive of his gratitude to God for the blessings he has received.

These are the "works which follow" a good man's memory when he is gone, and endear it to those he has left behind him. Few men have passed away more regretted than this parochial philanthropist, whose loving life, humbly and quietly as he spent it, was felt in its charitable influence on every side of his daily walk. The following lines, read at the children's entertainment intended to have been given by his wonted bounty, but provided by Mrs. French, the kind representative of his feelings and wishes, exactly express the veneration in which he was held:—

He's not here to-night! for he rests in the bed,
Where slumbers the dust of the sanctified dead;
Till, called in the morning, they rise from the grave,
The ransomed of Him who is "Mighty to save."

He's not here to-night! for his race has been run;
His warfare is ended—his victory won.
From youth to old age he well served his dear Lord,
And now he enjoys the rich promised reward.

He's not here to-night! for he's gone up on high;
And "Father, my Father," we hear each child cry:
Whilst all, like Elisha, are ready to say—
"The Chariot and Horseman" are taken away.

He's not here to-night! but, embalmed in each breast,
Are the virtues of him that is gone to his rest;
And long will the fruits of his labours remain;
And long will be felt the great loss we sustain.

He's not here to-night! but on that happy shore,
Where sin, death, and hell will have power no more,

He'll be amongst those who, in glory Divine,
Because they saved others, as stars ever shine.

He's not here to-night! those poor children to bless,
Whom, in fervour of love, he was wont to address.
But many, we trust, will be seen with him there,
As jewels adorning the crown he will wear.

W. C.

TAXATION OF RAGGED AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

On June 10th a Conference was held at the Westminster Hotel, to consider the best means of ensuring the passing of the Bill introduced by Mr. C. Reed, M.P., to exempt Ragged and Sunday Schools from the payment of parish taxes. It was largely attended by delegates from London and the provinces.

The following members of Parliament were present:—Messrs. Dimsdale, Hibbert, J. I. Briscoe, Barrow, A. Cross, Marling, C. Turner, Bazley, Egerton, Simon, M'Clure, Muntz, Johnston, Armitstead, Tipping, McArthur, Barnes, and Bowring.

The following places and Schools were represented by delegates:—Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Newcastle, Hull, York, Hastings, Sunday School Institute, and Sunday School Union. Messrs. Gent, Hytche, and Curtis represented the Ragged School Union; Messrs. Brain, Hartley, Towers, &c., represented the Sunday School Union.

Mr. C. Reed, M.P., who presided, stated that 480 petitions had been presented in favour of the Bill, which stood for second reading on Wednesday next, signed by 40,000 people, and he had no doubt that number would be doubled before another week. By the recent decision of the law courts making Ragged and Sunday Schools, which had been previously considered exempt, liable to local taxation, the managers of such Schools had been taken by surprise. The present was the first movement in connection with parliamentary proceedings, except a question which was put to Mr. Hardy in 1867, to which the reply was that the Government were not then prepared to bring in a measure to remedy the evil, leaving it to be inferred that had they remained in office, such a Bill would have been introduced by them thereafter. The President of the Poor Law Board was to a certain extent opposed to admitting any infringement of the principle of rating, and that objection they would have to contend with. But if they did not succeed this year, the question would not be at an end, for the whole country would be so roused upon the subject, and such a representation of strength and popular feeling would be made upon it as Parliament probably was not prepared for. He added that some of the Sunday Schools were so connected with churches and chapels that they would not be affected by the Bill, being already exempt.

Mr. Bazley, M.P., urged that to tax Schools depending entirely on voluntary aid, and which did battle with ignorance closely connected with crime, was to tax the benevolence and philanthrophy of the age.

Serjeant Simon, M.P., thought that the matter must be settled practically

out of Parliament, and recommended a deputation to the Secretary of State. On the other hand, Mr. Egerton, M.P., Mr. Muntz, M.P., Mr. Bazley, M.P., Mr. Hibbert, M.P., and others, considered it best to evoke the operation of the House of Commons.

In reply to a question, the Chairman stated that if the exemption were not allowed, many of the Schools—the Ragged Schools especially—would be closed; and Mr. Gent pointed out that taking the charges upon seventeen of the Ragged Schools, the aggregate rate which the whole of the Ragged Schools in London would have to pay, would be £3,000 a year.

All the members of Parliament and delegates who took part in the discussion spoke strongly in favour of the measure; most of them holding that the proposed exemption would decrease rather than increase the charge upon the ratepayers generally.

Mr. C. Reed, in moving the second reading of the Sunday Ragged Schools Bill, on June 16, addressed the House with great earnestness, resting his claim for their immunity from taxation upon the valuable services which were rendered by Sunday and Ragged Schools in the education of children who but for them would receive no instruction at all; and dwelling with much force upon the mischief which would result from the restriction of the number of new Schools, and the closing of many which were now in existence, which must result from any attempt to levy rates upon them. The hon. gentleman's arguments were very favourably received. Mr. Graves, in seconding the motion for the second reading, characterised the Sunday School as the outwork of the Church, and the Ragged School as the outwork of the Poor-houses. Mr. P. Wyndham, who moved the rejection of the Bill, founded himself upon the importance of applying one uniform system of rating to all descriptions of property. The President of the Poor Law Board both condemned the principle and questioned the details of the Bill; but upon a division the second reading was carried by a majority of 157—228 to 71.

Poet's Corner.

THE NEW CRUSADE.

In the dead of the winter night,
As I lay on my couch awake,
There fell as it seemed a light,
And I heard a voice that spake.

And it seemed, but I know not why,
The voice of Him that died,
On the holy Mount of Calvary—
Jesus the crucified!

Yet with half-reluctant air,
I turned on my pillow, and said:
'Speak, Spirit, what message you bear,
Is it news from the living or dead?"

And the Spirit answered again,
"O creature troubled and crossed,
Surely I died in vain—
For my lambs are straying and lost!

In the crush of your proud great city,
So full of revel and scorn,
Have you neither place nor pity
For the little ones weakly and lorn?

They know not their way in the shadows,
Though Wisdom still cries to be heard;
Far better the marsh and the meadows,
The life of the bee or the bird!"

Then I said—"O Lord I am thine,
And wait but the word from Thee;
But why are Thy looks divine
So searchingly turned on me?"

Then He spake, and with kind command,
His words, as the dew came down—
"Brother, the day is at hand,
Lay hold on the Cross and the Crown!

Behold as I pass through your streets,
My watchmen away or asleep;
And for ever there come the bleats
Of the wandering desolate sheep,

From garrets seething with leaven
Of idleness, folly, and sin,
Where the only glimpse of my heaven
Is the stars that look shuddering in;

From all the waste-places of plenty,
From wretchedness deep as the grave,
They call you! Go forth, I have sent you,
Go forth in my spirit, and save!"

So spake He, and speaking He vanished,
And I tell but the vision to-day;
But when from this heart shall be banished
The voice that has pointed the way?

Oh, brothers and sisters mine,
In the dead of your winter night,
Should the self-same Spirit shine
And utter such words of might—

Wait not for the bigots and schemers,
Still fighting for sway in their schools;
Heed not all the profitless dreamers,
Asleep o'er their systems and rules;

There is work for the hands that are willing,
And trophies for hearts that are true.
See now! the dark places are filling
With beacon-lights kindled anew!

Go forth! They are far from the fold,
In their wretchedness black as the grave,
While the Shepherd calls, as of old,
"Go forth in my Spirit and save!"

ALSAGER HAY-HILL.

Teachers' Column.

THE HANDY TEACHER.

HE goes forth to labour in God's vineyard, knowing nothing of his destiny except that something will be found him to do. His face is calm with a perfect reliance on the will of his Maker, and from his eyes shines forth the light of the spirit within his soul. True mothers bless him, and little babes lisp his name. A man who is always in the market-place, yet never out of employ. Calm and seemingly self-reliant, he is known to be equal to any emergency; yet diffident and retiring, and staying at the foot of the table spread to regale the babes until his Master says, "Come up higher, and feed My lambs." Such is the handy teacher in the School, and his very presence is like sunshine in winter to the soul of the superintendent. In most Schools some "missing link" will be wanting. This the handy teacher supplies.

As a pioneer the handy teacher is invaluable; and therefore in Ragged Schools, where so much fallow-ground has to be broken up, he is not only priceless, but a necessity. He is not always highly educated, but he serves a good Master, and has placed his few talents unreservedly at his service, waiting his will for the increase. Office he never seeks, yet out of him are the best superintendents made. The secret of his success is that he waits continually on the Lord, and with that master-key he unlocks all difficulties and slays every "lion in the path."

The small results from great labours in many Schools may often be attributed to the want of handy teachers. The machinery is perfect, but the "missing link" is supplied by any inefficient material at hand, and though there is no stoppage, the disorder is apparent, and soul-saving is out of the question. Like Topsy, the handy teacher is supposed to grow. So do weeds; and it needs an experienced eye to detect the one from the other in the embryonic state. The wheat and the tare are much alike soon after breaking the clod; and though we do not for an instant compare any teacher to the tare, still the young corn which runneth to grass is often mistaken for the less stalwart hundred-eared grain.

God grant that in the day of need the handy teacher may not be sought in vain, or the superintendent be blind to his value when budding forth under the hand of the Lord. F.

Children's Gallery.

"RIGHT UP TO JESUS."

HUNDREDS of poor boys and girls now attend the Children's Services conducted on Sunday mornings in many Ragged Schools. Some of these we have visited; and oh, how our hearts have been gladdened when we have seen these young disciples earnestly listen to the story of the cross. Then, too, their very hearts were in the sweet hymns they

sang. But better than all, some have been led to enter the fold of the Good Shepherd, and they now know how sweetly he carries the lambs in his arms.

Shall I tell you of one of these lambs of Jesus? E—— C——, aged 13, attended the Children's Service, conducted in Old Castle Street Ragged School. She had a drunken father and a most unhappy home. The kind teacher often noticed her earnest attention, and saw the tear of sorrow on her cheek. One night, going home from the meeting, she said to her mother, "Mother, I don't care how I am laughed at, or what I have to bear, I mean to give myself right up to Jesus." Every morning and night afterwards saw her on her knees in prayer. Her voice was often heard at that meeting pleading that other children might find Jesus.

A lady took her as a servant, and gave an excellent account of her. She still continues steadfast, and has been received into church fellowship.

Editor's Note-book.

MODERN REVIVALS.

In one of his note-books the late Chinese missionary, the Rev. J. Milne, thus wrote on modern revivals. He says that "most of the existing body and soul of New England churches originated in revivals; and hence a danger of fancying that little advance is to be expected or laboured for when there is no special work of God going on. Who can tell whether these occasional periodic showers or a continual down-dropping dew would be best?

But let us seek directness of aim; expect conversions, even when not aware that the Spirit is at work, in the way of prayerfulness and inquiry. In revival times there is expectation of being heard; earnestness and determination of mind commensurate. At other times there is a general faith of God's willingness to answer; but *now* (in revival times) there is a fervour kindled by a distinct grasp of its object as present and immediately attainable. The hearer now comes expecting that we shall call him to repent immediately and turn to God; conversion is in the mind both of preacher and hearer. Hence we find in America short seasons of energetic fruitful nature, and then long dead vacations.

God's love, interest in his church, faithfulness, never change; and he puts special honour upon those who are steadfast, and go on against discouragements and opposing currents. There are instances of revival going on through a whole ministry. Let revival effort be used even when revival does not exist."

What is needed is not a spasmodic effort, but continuous labour and constant prayer. Where these are, a true "revival" is not far off.

HOW TO SAVE SOULS.

Perhaps you are specially anxious for the soul of a scholar. Take that soul in the arms of faith to the throne of grace. Pray earnestly, and in confidence, that the promise, "Whatsoever ye ask in my name, *believing*, ye shall receive," is for *you*. But let not your labour cease here; strive to show that scholar that you long to bring him to heaven with you. Seize every opportunity to speak of Jesus and entreat him to be reconciled to God.

If you have grown cold, and lost that sweet communion with Christ which you once enjoyed, here is an efficient means of banishing your lukewarmness. Set yourself about praying for some soul who has never tasted the joys of pardon; forget self; throw your whole soul into the effort to bring that soul to God, and surely he will bless you in your own soul. Your heart will be made glad; the cloud will vanish, and you will once more bask in the rays of the Sun of righteousness.

Work then for Jesus. Live *for* him, and you shall live *with* him when your work is done.

DESPAIR OF NONE.

PROBABLY no one, save John Bunyan, ever drank so deeply of the dregs of sin as John Newton, the author of the Olney Hymns. But when he was enlightened by the Holy Spirit, he became one of the most earnest labourers for Christ that ever adorned the church. Like Mary Magdalene, he "loved much," because he was "forgiven much." Thus eminent for consecration, he became equally eminent for success.

Like the apostle Paul, he never forgot what he had been, nor was he ashamed to confess how much he owed to Divine grace. Thus, having asked a friend whether he knew the writer of a letter he had just received, his friend replied that he had been a most awful character, and almost in all evil. "But," said Mr. N., "he writes now like a penitent." "He may be such," said his friend, "but if he be, I shall never despair of the conversion of any one again." "Oh," said Mr. N., "I never did, since God saved *me*."

Our Library Table.

The Art of Picturing. By W. H. Groser, B.Sc. London: Sunday School Union.

THIS is an essay by an experienced Sunday School teacher on the art of word-painting. This gift is more common in France and Italy than in England, and hence the wondrous power of their great preachers. We should be glad to see this pictorial art more cultivated, for anything that can awaken the interest of our scholars is of the greatest value. Whether it be in class-teaching or the collective address, he who can bring the scene narrated before the eye has a power for good which cannot be exaggerated. In some this power of word-painting is as much a natural gift as that of poetry; but Mr. Groser shows, by rules and illustrations lucidly expressed, how much may be done to cultivate the power in those who were not born with this special gift. Such persons will assuredly never reach the pictorial power of a Bunyan; but if they study these hints, they will do more than they ever expected, for they will make all their lessons powerful, because life-like.

Analysis of English History. By W. C. Pearce and S. Hague, LL.B. London: Murby.

To the ninth thousand of this excellent school manual a Biographical Appendix has been added. It gives a faithful outline of the lives of all those great Englishmen who have made our country what it is. Though too many were more eminent for their greatness than for their goodness, yet they all so made their mark on English history, that no one can understand the secret of our national progress who knows nothing of their lives. This information is imparted in the Appendix; and the sketches, though necessarily brief, are accurate and full. This adds much to the value of a history which, from its accuracy, fulness, and impartiality, bids fair to become *the* school history of our public schools.

Notices of Meetings.

CLARE MARKET.

THE twenty-second annual meeting of the friends and subscribers to this charity was held in the school-rooms, Denzell Street, a narrow crowded thoroughfare at the back of Clare Market. Mr. W. H.

Smith, M.P., was to have taken the chair, but, owing to the debate on the Law Courts' site, he was unable to do so, and his place was supplied by Mr. Stillwell.

Mr. John Palmer, the hon. secretary, read the report, which announced that the Schools are growing in usefulness, though the supporters do not exhibit a corresponding increase. This had arisen from no lack of sympathy, but was occasioned by the death of old subscribers and the removal of others from the neighbourhood. The cost of adapting the new school-rooms, £151 11s. 6d., was contributed within the space of three months, while the donations and subscriptions for the year produced £171 15s. 8d.; but the expenditure had absorbed £204 1s. 1d., leaving a balance of £38 5s. 5d. due to the treasurer. The average attendance at the Day School for Boys and Girls was 180 out of 256, and at the Infant School 110 out of 208 on the register. Many of the elder boys and girls had been provided with situations, and the Infant School is now under the charge of a former pupil. There are also Night Schools, Sunday Schools, and Monthly Classes, and in all about 500 children are annually being rescued from the streets and alleys of Drury Lane. A Penny Savings' Bank, a Lending Library, and a Clothing Fund, are also attached to the Schools, and the building is periodically used for Parents' Meetings of both sexes. In the winter months Penny Readings are given, and are found to be self-supporting.

GUN STREET.

The 24th annual meeting of this School was held on May 3rd. Richard Hoare, Esq., presided. The report stated that during the past year there have been admitted to the Sunday School 80; to the Day and Infant, 163; to the Night School, 51; making a total of 294; the whole number since the reopening of the School being now 4,117. The average attendance for the year has been, Sunday School, 120; Day and Infant, 190; Night School, 60. It may be added that 8 "old" scholars have this year received prizes from the Ragged School Union.

The Mothers' Meeting, conducted by Mrs. Bardsley, still continues to be well attended—the average number present being still 125.

The School Library has been much enlarged, and now contains 330 volumes.

The Penny Bank is increasingly valued by the poor people of the neighbourhood. There has been 444 depositors; the sum deposited was £224 17s.; withdrawn, £106 13s. 3d.; leaving £118 3s. 9d., together with £3 6s. 8d. to pay out at Christmas.

The meeting was addressed by the Earl of Mulgrave; Revs. S. Bardsley, J. M. Fidler, Mr. Thomas; Mr. E. J. Hytche; and Messrs. W. Richards, T. Whittington, and Dowson.

OGLE MEWS.

The twenty-fifth annual meeting of the above Schools was held in the school-rooms. Sir R. W. Carden presided.

The proceedings having been opened with prayer by the Rev. G. Pocock, the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Pitts, read the annual report. The details of the work are as follows:—Average attendance of the Sunday Schools, afternoon, 63. The Committee make an earnest appeal for additional teachers for these Schools. At the Sunday School the attendance on the average is 237. The scholars who have obtained situations through the kindness of the teachers and friends have again given gratifying evidence of good conduct. The Prayer Meetings on Wednesday evenings for teachers, the elder scholars, and parents of children, have been continued with success. The average attendance at the Week-day Evening School for boys is 31, and the attendance of girls 33. The average attendance at the Infant School is 113. The average attendance of the readers at the Library is, boys 20, girls 23. There are altogether 350 volumes of useful and interesting literature. The Savings Bank is opened every Monday evening to receive deposits of one penny.

Papers, Original and Selected.

FOUNDERS OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

We are often asked this question, Who originated the Ragged School system? Nor when we consider the magnitude of their present operations, and how, in addition to including above 100,000 scholars in England, they have extended to the continent, and even to the far East, can we be surprised at this inquiry. For surely he, if such a man there be, who discovered this method of gospelising our social pariahs, deserves to have his name placed high among our national worthies.

Yet the question, Who founded Ragged Schools? is more easily asked than answered. For, like many striking discoveries in science, the idea seems to have sprung into the minds of several Christian men at the very same moment. Thus, as respects the planet Neptune, Leverrier in France, and Adams in England, by a series of mathematical inquiries of the most abstruse character, discovered its existence and position at almost the same minute. So is it with Ragged Schools; for without concert, and we may say in many cases without any knowledge that others were using the same methods to save juvenile outcasts, Ragged Schools, under divers names, were planted about the same period in the crime-quarters of London. Doubtless they were led to this work by the same Spirit, whose province it is to devise machinery and to anoint the agents.

When the Ragged School Union started on its mission of mercy about twenty-six years ago, its founders discovered twenty such institutions in London. About a moiety were called Ragged Schools; the name, first given to the Field Lane School by its then secretary, being copied by many similar institutions. A similar School, established so far back as 1835 in Gray's Yard, by a lady, who still lives to see the success of her work, was called a "Free School." Those which were founded by Miss Howell—the pioneer of Westminster—were called "Schools for the Destitute." Most of these twenty Schools still exist; this being the only difference—growing year by year, the pigmy has become a giant.

Some of the founders of Ragged Schools, as we have hinted, were ladies of distinction. Influenced by a powerful missionary spirit, they strove personally to socialise and to save the outcasts of this great city. Thus we have seen the wives of prime ministers, daughters of dukes, and wives of judges, steadily engaged in Ragged Schools. In these cases, at least, it could not be said that Dives permitted Lazarus to lie at his door unaided; but in the spirit of their Divine Master, they poured out the wealth of their sympathy on those who, friendless and forlorn, were born to a heritage of woe. And we doubt not that the brightest gems in their crown at the last day will have been found and polished in the crime-gardens of London. And thus they will fully realise the Divine promise, "Thy work *shall* be rewarded, saith Jehovah."

Many Ragged Schools have been founded in another way; namely, benevolent persons have placed funds at the disposal of the Ragged School Union to open a School in some neglected district, leaving its officers to select the spot, and to organise the local committee. In this way a Ragged School was opened in Snow's Fields, and another near Rotherhithe, the united attendance at which exceeds 400. And thus, if two flourishing Ragged Schools exist in needy districts, it is simply because local Christians were stimulated to the work by the liberal donations of the author of "Ministering Children."

But we must go much lower down the social ladder if we would discover the bulk of the founders of Ragged Schools. Need we re-tell the story of John Pounds, of Portsmouth, one among the many who can claim this title?—he who for want of school material taught his scholars from scraps of paper torn from the placards on hoardings. Need we repeat the story, told in many a picture, how he won the heart of "Paddy" by running after him with a roasted potato, and thus obtained another raw recruit for his School? No; his name is for ever *fixed* in the list of those who have made England what it is, and the after-history of his 500 scholars shows how much the poorest can do for society when the heart is stirred by Christian love.

Many such men as this poor cobbler have we met in our School visitation. For example, a poor tinker, suffering from heart disease, and whose earnings did not average ten shillings weekly, turned his home, in the notorious Kent Street, into a school-room. This room, like that of the celebrated cobbler of our boyhood, served him "as

parlour, kitchen, and all." But there he gathered many of the children of the thieves of Kent Street for secular and religious instruction. Many times have we seen this room swarming with children; nay, the passage and the window in the street were crowded with those who could not gain admittance. Oft-times he went without tea in order to find money to buy candles. In this way he worked for two or three years unknown, until his case was brought under the notice of Lord Shaftesbury, who kindly gave the officials of the Ragged School Union, from a fund placed at his disposal, sufficient to lease and adapt more fitting premises. For the past ten years the Walker Street School has been a centre of gospel light, in a most degraded district; and it has also been the pioneer of two other Ragged Schools, the united attendance at which is nearly 700.

We also knew another poor tinker, who founded the Hatcham Ragged School. When he commenced his labour in that populous district, there was neither church, chapel, nor school; and the swarms of sickly, half-clad little ones playing in the gutter might well have said, "No man careth for our souls." This School he conducted in his parlour, almost unaided, either by money or by helpers. When we visited it one dark winter evening, we were up to our ankles in mud, for those tokens of civilisation, gas and pavements, were as unknown as in the isles of Fejee. The shouts of boys, and the shrill scream of girls, piloted our way through the dense fog, and there we found this tinker, after a hard day's tramp to vend his wares, teaching about sixty boys and girls. Our visit led to the formation of a committee, and the ultimate removal of the School to larger premises. But if now 200 scholars attend this School, and if another is just started in the same street, it is simply because a poor tinker was constrained to teach these children of neglect that in heaven there is a home, and a hearty welcome, for the vilest or the most forlorn.

The same feature meets us in country Ragged Schools, and the history of many tells how much poor men have done to help their poorer brethren. For example, in the Royal Burgh of Windsor, a Ragged School was planted about twenty-four years ago, and, though with a chequered career, it has done much to socialise and to save the children of want. But who had the honour of founding it? Was it a member of the Royal household, or a collegian of Eton? No; this honour, for such it is, if measured by the Bible, and not by worldly maxims, must be divided between a city missionary and a chimney-sweep. The School is thus described in a report pub-

lished above twenty-three years ago: "At Windsor there is a Ragged School conducted by a poor chimney-sweep, where the visitor lately found, in a sort of shed with an earth floor, there were gathered about 100 young persons." He was aided by some privates of the Life Guards, who did much to make the School remarkable for its discipline. The sweep has gone to his rest, but in reclaimed souls he had his reward here, and not a few, doubtless, will be "his crown of joy and rejoicing in the day of the Lord."

And even now, when Ragged Schools have not to fight for the recognition of society, how many poor men and women are earnest workers in the dens of London! Space would fail us to tell of the cobblers, cabmen, butchers, tenants of almshouses, and those of a similar social grade, who delight to tell old and young of the true riches treasured up in Jesus. Some of these themselves are the living trophies of Ragged Schools. Knowing the habits of thought, nay, the very dialect of these classes, they speak with a power which goes direct to the heart, and thus souls are prepared for the eternal garner of God.

Such are some of the founders of Ragged Schools; men whose deep "poverty ministered unto the riches of their liberality." And we know that those who have gone to their rest, as well as those who are still toiling amid the crime-gardens of our great cities, would not exchange their position for that of the greatest noble. If, as Dr. Johnson so well said, "he who makes a blade of grass to grow where it never grew before is a public benefactor," how much more are they entitled to public honour who descended into the dark mines of social degradation, if haply they might bring to the surface some hidden gem, remove its roughness, and polish it for ever? Whether a public monument will perpetuate their fame is more than doubtful; for we often think that those who are *not* buried in Westminster Abbey will be found at the last to have been God's heroes. But this we know, that in redeemed souls these poor founders of Ragged Schools have carved for themselves an eternal monument; for on it will be this indelible inscription, by the finger of our Lord, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

THE JUVENILES OF KENT STREET.

BY THE REV. JAMES AMOS, M.A.

KENT STREET is a kind of house of call for any and all the desperate characters in London, and the more wretched consideration is that such has been the state of the neighbourhood, that it has been a nursery for criminals, and these of the most violent description. Every child in Kent Street is a possible thief; the child that most wins upon you, from being rather above his years, is a very probable one. Very many of the boys have hitherto gone to fill the ranks of criminals, falling very rapidly into the roughest and the most formidable class.

Within the last few months, one of the lads here, only nineteen years of age, has been taken up and sentenced to five years' penal servitude. He was the captain of a band called "the forty thieves." He became recently the terror of the neighbourhood, attacking people by running with his head against them, and in the confusion rifling their pockets, and while escaping, his comrades would stop pursuit by a formidable shower of stones, or other equally effective expedients. His mother, separated from her husband, used to turn the boy adrift, when six years of age, without breakfast, and give him to understand that he had better, by hook or by crook, get something for himself, as she did not intend to be at the cost of keeping him. Two of his brothers are very bad characters, and one of them is also in prison for stealing from a house. This young fellow was called Captain "Plummy," because his occupation had once been the selling of plums in the street, as a costermonger. By the way, not a few of this class lose their own names and get known by that which they principally sell. A young woman recently died who was known as "Cocoa-nut." It is curious that one of the sisters of this "captain" is one of the best members of our Sewing Class, and the mother within the last year has regularly attended the Mothers' Meeting.

In years past the evil was done. Under the present influences which are at work, I have no doubt he would have received very different home treatment. There is a better spirit growing up amongst us all.

Among the institutions capable of affording good hopes for the improvement of a poor neighbourhood, you will naturally turn to the education of the children. With the slender means at the disposal of St. Stephen's, Kent Street, we support two Schools, one at which small payments are taken, and another, a Ragged School, which is free. There are in the parish two other Ragged Schools besides, carried on with great benefit to the neighbourhood. Each of these three Ragged Schools is assisted with a grant from the Ragged School Union Society. These four Day Schools may be roughly assumed to be each gathering together about the same number of children, the whole together having an actual attendance of somewhere about five hundred. It must be remembered, however, that it is only children between four and nine years of age who on an average attend, so that there are a very large number kept rapidly passing through our Schools, receiving what little scraps of education it may be possible in so short a time to give them. It is really wonderful how much they get to

know The importance will be felt, however, in the matter of education, so earnestly demanded in the neighbourhood, of making hay while the sun shines; and as the sun shines but a very short time, the hay ought to be made in the very best and in the most energetic way. Far larger and more certain support is required to enable our Schools to do the work which comes to their hand, with any just hope of their being made useful in thoroughly elevating the population as a whole.

It would probably be found that with children like those in Kent Street, some part of the school time might be profitably given to learning some useful trade or manufacture. They would thus gain habits which would enable them with greater benefit to pursue other studies; it would probably lead to the parents letting them stay a much longer time at School, and it would qualify them for taking up useful positions, exempt from the many sorrows and temptations which surround the hand-to-mouth life which is the usual one here.

The question is being earnestly asked, How shall we deal with the crime of our great cities? Shall we not be more severe upon the criminal? Shall we not so arrange to look after him to the end of his days that he shall be able to do no more harm? But shall we not, rather, be more kind to those classes, yet unfallen, which are exposed to the greatest temptations? Shall we not, for a few years at the beginning of their lives, see that they are really and sufficiently looked to with such Christian care and teaching, as by God's blessing may fit them to serve him, in their whole after-life, as useful members of society? There is a loud cry at the gushing out of the waters, which threaten to flood the street. It would not be so much amiss, if some would run and help to cut off the supply.

EARLY CONVERSIONS.

The moment children are capable of sinning—breaking God's law—that moment they are capable of repenting, of turning to God, of understanding the doctrines and precepts of the Bible, repentance, faith, and a holy life. Children, taught as they should be from early infancy, know and feel that it is an evil and bitter thing to sin against God, and that wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are paths of peace.

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Prov. viii. 17). Christian, where is your faith? "According to your faith be it unto you." "All things are possible to him that believeth." "Seek first" for your little ones "the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things shall be added unto you."

Samuel was a little child when he ministered unto the Lord, and heard his voice. "And he grew, and the Lord was with him; and the Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh."

Paul, speaking of little Timothy, says, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

These are examples left on record by the Spirit of grace to teach us what may be done, in the strength and wisdom of the Most High. The Holy Spirit never strikes more powerfully than in early childhood.

The late Countess of Huntingdon was only a little child when she gave her heart to Christ; and she was not only rich in this world, but eminently "rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom." Who can read the early conversion and life of the wife of President Edwards, and doubt her being a child of God? or the thrilling narrative which he gives of Phebe Bartlett, a child but five years old? For seventy years she testified to God's love in revealing himself to a child. In the late memoirs of the Rev. Dr. Justin Edwards, it is stated that the heavenly conversion and Christian spirit manifested in her last sickness, were the means of spiritual life to this eminent servant of Christ.

One who has long been a "mother in Israel," and whose deep spirituality and holy life had given her an extended influence of the happiest kind, was wont to say, she could not remember the time when she did not love Christ and find her greatest delight in doing his will. In her life and in her death she has given the most satisfactory evidence of religion pure and undefiled.

A young lady in a Sunday School, a few mornings since, asked her class how soon a child should give its heart to God. One little girl said, "When thirteen years old;" another, "Ten;" another, "Six." Then, at length, the last child in the class spoke: "Just as soon as we know who God is."

LUCKNOW RAGGED SCHOOL.

THE following extracts from various letters from its managers furnish an interesting account of the rise and progress of the Lucknow Ragged School. The wife of the Rev. S. Attlee, an earnest missionary, thus describes the opening of the Lucknow Ragged School in August, 1860:—

"If you could be here some cool morning about seven o'clock, it would interest you very much to see my little Ragged Girls' School, which we opened in our own spacious veranda, on the 23rd of June. Only four children came the first day; by the end of the week they had brought four more, and now we have about twenty. An old woman goes round to their different homes to collect them every morning, and after a bath and dressing up in clean jackets and petticoats, they come to me with a hearty 'Salaam, Mem Sahib' and such happy bright faces. They were little wild things at first, never having been under any restraint; but I see a daily improvement; and their spelling, sewing, and reading, or repeating texts and hymns, would not disgrace even English children. It gladdens our hearts very greatly in this dark land to hear the blessed Bible words from the mouths of these poor little ones, and we cannot but hope and pray that when they can read it for themselves, some rays of light may thus enter their wretched homes, by the lips of these babes. It is certainly the most hopeful part of missionary work; for the men and women seem sadly hardened in sin."

Mrs Menge writes on April 4th, 1862:—

"Some of the bigger girls have left the Ragged School during the past year, and younger ones have come. The present number is about eighteen. Sutulkah, a little Brahmin girl, is one of the most interesting and regular. Husnah and Kareeman are also very quick and intelligent. Kareeman gave me much trouble at first, but I am happy to say that there is now a very marked change in her for the better. Seven can now read St. Matthew's gospel in the Persian character; and they seem quite pleased when they are allowed to take their gospels to read at home. The elder girls have learnt all Watts's Scripture Catechism and many hymns and portions of Scripture. They can count up to one hundred. Some of their mothers visit me, and I speak to them of the one thing needful."

Mrs. Reuther says, January 16th, 1864:—

"Lucy, formerly one of Mrs. Fuch's orphan girls, is teacher of the Ragged School. Every day about twenty little Mohammedan girls, literally in rags, come to our part of the mission house. They are bathed and dressed in clean clothes, and then sit down to be taught from God's holy word, to learn hymns and reading, of course all in Hindustani, and to do plain needlework. When they go away, each gets a pice (about one farthing), not for coming to School, but to make up to their mothers for the time the little ones have lost. As they belong to the poorest, they have to give their share to the support of the family, either by running errands or by gathering cow-dung, which the poor use as fuel, or dry sticks, or leaves, or by carrying bricks on their heads to builders. These little creatures, most of them only six or eight years old, are very fond of their pretty hymns and Bible stories. They also like me to sing with them, which I do gladly. The religious teaching is my share of the work, while Lucy attends to the rest."

Miss Reuther, the daughter of a missionary writes, July 17th, 1865:—

"The Bazaar children know these hymns—'I need Thee, precious Jesus,' 'All hail the power of Jesu's name,' 'Come, thou fount of every blessing,' 'There is a happy land,' 'Here we suffer grief and pain,' 'God save the Queen," and several others. They are now taught to knit. Their attendance is irregular; they come for two or three weeks, and then leave for months. They are so very poor, that a little parched grain is given to them by Catherine every day. It is quite touching to see the eager faces and trembling hands, as they take this and the money which we give on Saturdays."

The wife of the Rev. J. Fuchs thus wrote in September, 1868:—

"From thirty to forty children now attend the Ragged School, in a house close to ours. In the hot season they come from six to half-past nine o'clock, and in the cool season from seven to ten. The school is opened with prayer; then three texts are learnt, a prayer, command and promise, from the 'Three-fold cord'; then Dr. Barth's Bible History and St. John's Gospel are read. After that they do sums in their heads, and from a counting board, having no slates. Next, a hymn is learnt, and they do plain sewing, making their own clothes of any strong material which I can get cheaply. Lately a hymn has been sung between each lesson. Every day before they leave, the attendance is written down and brought to me. I have a pretty collection of Bible pictures, which I show occasionally, to the children's great delight.

Every girl who leaves the School takes away her gospel, and if she comes to say good-bye, I give some other books as well; but their homes are not yet open to us, so that we soon lose sight of them. Yet the effect of our teaching is scarcely ever rubbed off entirely. Their present teacher, Rosa Anne Webb, has written a list of thirty-five names."

The same earnest worker for Christ says, January 8th, 1869:—

"The Bazaar School is going on nicely. Thirty-six girls come regularly, I hope some more will join us. The only disadvantage is the early age at which they are married. Thus we lose our most promising pupils every year."

"Brethren, pray for us," say our friends at Lucknow. Will not our readers heartily respond "Amen"?

In Memoriam.

MR. JOHN DALLEN, OF NEW CUT.

THE funeral sermon of the late Mr. John Dallen, of Robert Street Ragged School, was preached in York Road Chapel, on the evening of May 2nd, 1869, from the text, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John" (John i. 6). It illustrated the thought that every man is sent from God, every man is sent from God for a purpose, every man is sent from God to be a blessing, and every man, when his allotted time is finished, must return to Him who sent him,

The preacher said: Look back upon the life and labours of John Dallen during thirteen years of his union with the Robert Street Ragged School, and you will see clearest evidence that he recognised the fact that he was 'a man sent from God,' sent for a purpose, sent to be a blessing. And was he not a blessing? Many a poor man and woman and child whom he has helped in the time of their distress could give the answer. He did much work out of sight, not letting his left hand know what his right hand did. But these were his lower works—helping tradesmen who were in difficulties, relieving the distressed, assisting youths to situations, widows to almshouses, incurables to hospitals, fatherless and motherless children to orphanages. I could give you cases of all these kinds, but these were his lower works.

For thirteen years he found the sphere of his greatest and highest labours in the Robert Street Ragged School. With a steady hand, a persevering spirit, and a loving heart, he gave himself to his chosen work till sickness laid him aside. When taken ill he was superintendent, secretary, and treasurer of the School; doubtless the burden was too heavy for him to bear. To the teachers of the School he was indeed, "a man sent from God." Their testi-

mony is as follows. "For a period of thirteen years he was always found to be an earnest, firm, loving, and faithful leader, one to whom teachers and scholars alike could and did look up, with confidence and affection." To many of the scholars he was emphatically "a man sent from God." One illustration may be given. Several youths had left the School, and were enticing another to follow their example. Mr. Dallen's quick eye discovered this, and very quietly he put into the youth's hand a slip of paper, on which was written, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." These were words spoken in due season; they entered the youth's heart, brought him to the feet of Jesus, and now he is a member of a Christian church, and a teacher in the School. Those who were nearest and dearest to him knew and felt him to be "a man sent from God." His Christian life is before them, his prayers form their best inheritance, and his last words to his three boys were "Look to Jesus, look to Jesus!"

By the church and congregation with which he was associated he was felt to be "a man sent from God." Only five months ago he was elected a deacon of the church. It was then our fond hope that God would in great mercy restore his health, establish his strength, and spare him to us for years of happy spiritual toil. Such, however, was not the will of our Heavenly Father, and to his will we must bow. May he help us to bow cheerfully! And now, if he could bend from his throne in heaven and speak to us, what think you his words would be? My heart tells me that to us all, pastor, deacons, church members, hearers of the word, Sunday and Ragged School teachers and scholars, to us all he would say, as he said to his beloved wife, children, and relatives, "Look to Jesus, look to Jesus!" And may the great Spirit help us all to "look to Jesus"!

REST FOR WEARY WORKERS.

NO. III.

In our number for April (p. 65) we stated that such a hearty response had been made to "A. L. O. E.'s" appeal that a week's "rest to weary workers" would be given at once. In April the first party went to Elm Cottage, and found it a home in the best sense of the word. Week by week, until October, arrangements have been made to send other paid teachers away from the grime and whirl of London to this pleasant spot.

From all the teachers we have received letters expressive of their gratitude for the benefit, as well mentally as bodily, they thus received. From four of these we make the following extracts.

One of the teachers who has for many years laboured in the Mint says: "It is really a great privilege to spend a week in the home of a real Christian family. We experienced the greatest possible kindness. The only regret that Mrs. Potts felt was that she was afraid, the way we were entertained, that Mrs. Howkins must be a loser. When we went to Elm Cottage the motto on our banner was, 'Rest for weary workers.' Thanks to kind Christian friends, we have had that sweet, quiet *rest;* and now the

motto on the flag shall be 'Hard work for refreshed workers, and grateful thanks to generous benefactors.' May God Almighty, for Christ's sake, bless the kind lady who originated, with her Christian mind, and aided with her benevolent heart, a plan which has for its object the refreshing and building up of Christ's poor weary workers."

Another, who works in the Devil's Acre of Westminster, thus writes:—"I was met by a sagacious setter, with two fat little pups, called May. She licked my hands, and otherwise expressed her joy that I had come, saying as plainly as any dog could say, 'So you are come, and I presume you are the "weary worker" that my mistress has been expecting; come in and see her—follow me," leading me at the same time to the kitchen door, when the welcome was reiterated by my kind hostess. To me the past week was made really a rest of body, mind, and soul, which I shall not soon or easily forget; and the only drawback, which, I do assure you, I could not help feeling, was this, that Mrs. Howkins must become a heavy loser by catering for us in the liberal manner she does. She seemed to try her best to provoke my appetite by some little delicacy or another. So unlike anything I had anticipated, and from my heart of hearts, I can say her treatment of me was just like that of an affectionate sister. Indeed, the kindness of the whole family was such as to lay me under a deep obligation to them. Such loving and loveable spirits, one regrets to say, are rarely to be met with."

Another master, who has charge of a Ragged School in Spitalfields, says:—"The holiday just enjoyed by me has been called 'Rest for the weary,' and truly it is so; for, throwing aside the cares and anxieties of my School, I revelled in delight as I walked the fields and lanes listening to the lark at early morning or dewy eve carolling her songs of praise to Him who careth even for the birds. I do not remember spending a happier or more health-restoring week than that I did last week at Mrs. Howkins's. Her courtesy and kindness deserve great praise; and it is perhaps partly owing to her cheerful and pleasant manners that I returned this week to my duties, not only in improved health and strength, but also in more cheerful spirits."

Another, who has long laboured in St. Pancras, could not rest, even amid his week of rest, from missionary work, for he says:—"I have been asked to call at a poor woman's cottage to read a chapter and offer prayer. Her poor afflicted husband said afterwards, 'We don't often have a Christian come to pray in our cottage.' They were very thankful, and hoped I would call again, which I promised to do. So we see we can do good even while we are enjoying our 'week's rest.'"

SCHOOL AGENT'S WORK FOR 1868—NORTH AND EAST.

From Mr. Curtis's Eighth Annual Report we make the following extracts, to show the nature of the work and the state of the Schools under his visitation:—

VISITS.

Sunday Schools	103
Day Schools	608
Night Schools	298
Parents' Meetings	7
Local Committees	
Public and Social Meetings	19
Special and Conferences	35
	1,073

SUMMARY OF NEW AND EXTENDED OPERATIONS.

Motley Street—Mixed School, Mothers' Meeting, and Provident Fund; London Street—Boys', Girls', and Infants' Day Schools, Evening School for Girls (two evenings), Sewing Class, Mothers' Meeting, Mission Service, Provident Fund, and Society for Relieving the Sick; Charles Street East—Sewing Class and Soup Kitchen; Bluegate Fields—Sewing Class; Hartshorn Court—Children's Service, Drum and Fife Band, and Magazine Club; Sandford Lane—Evening School (one evening); Carr Street—Soup Kitchen; Vine Street—Sewing Class; Denzell Street—Senior Bible Class; Ratcliff Square—Evening School, resumed (four evenings); Anchor Street—Mothers' Meeting; Hartshorn Court—Juvenile Sunday Band; Rufford's Buildings—Juvenile Sunday Band; Hatfield Street—Drum and Fife Band; Shadwell Railway—Children's Service; Lamb and Flag—Adult Service, Soup Kitchen, Relief Society, Depot for Sale of Pure Literature; Nichol Street—Depot for Sale of Pure Literature; Chequer Alley—Library for District, and Soup Kitchen; Northey Street—Girls' School (two evenings) and two Bible Classes; total, 34 new or extended operations.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

There are 47 school-buildings in East and 47 in North London. In the East, on Sunday morning, 22 Schools are open, with an attendance of about 1,500 children. In the North there are 24 Schools open, with an attendance of 2,100. In the East, on Sunday afternoon, 35 Schools are open, with an attendance of 4,666. In the North, on Sunday afternoon, 40 Schools are open, with an attendance of 4,200. In the East, on Sunday evening, 25 Schools are open, with an attendance of about 4,000. In the North, 31 Schools are open in the evening, with an attendance of 4,200. In 1862 the Schools open on Sunday morning were 39, they are now 44.

The attendance in 1862 was 2,465, in 1868 it was 3,503, being an increase of over 1,000 scholars. In 1862 the Sunday Afternoon Schools were 52, they are now 75. The attendance in 1862 was 6,638, in 1868 it is 9,634, being an increase of 3,000 scholars. In 1862 the Sunday Evening Schools were 37, in 1868 they are 56. The attendance in 1862 was 5,178, in 1868 it is 8,036, being an increase of about 3,000; total increase in the period, 7,000.

In 1862 the number of voluntary teachers was 1,437, in 1868 the number is 1,647; increase, 210. Average attendance in 1862 was 857, in 1868 it is 1,201; increase of average attendance, 344. This is encouraging, but still the supply is not equal to the demand. The difficulties of some superin-

tendents will appear from the following, which does not stand alone. At Darby Street, a few Sundays since, the superintendent I and were the only persons present at the opening. Outside were a great number of boys and girls, up to all kinds of mischief. As soon as the door was opened a crowd rushed in. For some time the order of the School was under the unassisted control of one man. He dealt with them in a very summary way; if a noise proceeded from a particular quarter, the whole class expiated the offence, they were at once driven out. Occasionally the rod was resorted to. In a little while order was obtained. One teacher and then another dropped in, till a tolerably fair supply was obtained, but a good supply is always a matter of uncertainty. Darby Street is in a very rude quarter; at every visit to the neighbourhood I am welcomed by some well directed missile. At my last visit a gentleman who conducts the Mission Service, and also collects for the School Christmas treat, came into the room with his coat covered with mud; and during the same evening a boy with a catapult threw a stone, which struck me under the eye.

Ernest Street, Mile End, affords a similar instance of a rough class, and probably more depraved. The School is so situated that missiles can be hurled by an unseen hand, and the mischievous not unfrequently avail themselves of the opportunity. One-third of those sometimes present are said to have been in gaol once, and some twice or more. I visited the School recently; found it very full and comparatively in order, but the teachers were not half sufficient. To my address they paid marked attention, and thanked me by a hearty shout when I left.

I must add a particular or two touching a few other Schools; for instance, Holloway Sunday Evening School is attended by a very rough class, who are kept in admirable control by their excellent superintendent. The attendance has increased; this is attributable to a larger and a more regular attendance of teachers.

On a recent visit to Nichol Street I found about 420 girls and young children under the charge of several teachers. A Children's Service was being conducted; two or three picturesque and anecdotal addresses were delivered, between which hymns were sung to tunes of a stirring character. The order was good, the attention lively, and the interest manifest, which will always be the case where the addresses are first-rate and the singing frequent. The Children's Service is the next best thing to class teaching, and is the only way properly to meet the circumstances of a paucity of teachers or a very crowded room. In an adjoining room 240 boys were under the charge of capable teachers.

The Chequer Alley Schools are carried on with considerable enthusiasm the attendance has reached 500; and though the number of teachers is not so large as is desirable, still the order has improved, and a marked influence is at work among the children. From the Senior Girls' Bible Class two have become teachers; and others from the same class have, on an emergency, been employed as teachers.

Hartshorn Court has added a Sunday Evening Juvenile Service, at which 50 attend, and 500 could be gathered had they a separate school-building large enough for the purpose. In connection with the School there are four Senior Classes for Bible study, with an aggregate weekly attendance of 125.

A short time ago many of their members associated with the dregs of society, spending their evenings in the penny gaff or a low concert-room, and their Sundays in boating on the river or larking in the streets. To keep a lad rom trading on the Sabbath in the streets, the members have engaged to make up, by a weekly subscription, the loss he would otherwise sustain.

In 1862 the Bible Classes were 29, with an attendance of 526; in 1868 they are over 40, with an attendance of more than 800.

The Teachers' Prayer Meetings in 1862 were 49, with an attendance of 700, exclusive of children; in 1868 they are over 60, with an attendance of 1,500; the number of children not stated. It would be well if the Senior cholars' Classes were conducted with a view to the training of teachers. uch classes should have an available library for reference, and subjects should be given out, either for short papers or short speeches. A certain number of them should be engaged every Sunday with a small class as a preparation for the office of teacher, and once a month a Scripture gallery lesson should be given to young children in the presence of the class.

I must add one word respecting the scholars. In order to ensure the attendance of the children of the Week Day School at the Sabbath School, I have recommended that the attendance be tested every Monday morning, and I think it would be well in the weekly and monthly returns that are supplied by the teachers to the Local Committees that the number of weekly absentees should be given, and especially the number of those attending nowhere. This might lead to some action on the part of Committees and the superintendents of the respective Sunday Schools.

From inquiries made in 26 Schools, I found that 566 children were absent on the previous Sunday, 238 of whom went nowhere.

DAY SCHOOLS.

In the districts under my superintendence there are 19 Boys' Schools —average attendance, 1,782; 15 Girls' Schools—average attendance, 1,321; 72 Mixed—average attendance, 10,037: total average attendance, 13,140. Average attendance in 1862 was 8,370. Increase of average attendance, nearly 5,000. Total number on the books in 1868, 19,700: total number on the books in 1862, 11,455. Increase on the books, 8,245.

EXAMINATIONS.

Number of Schools examined, 83. Of age for examination, 7,283. Present at examination, 12,586. I do not examine such as require to spell easy words of four or five letters, but such as are capable of reading monosyllables and a verse from the Bible fluently. Those who can read a sentence of monosyllables are marked moderate, while those who can read an average verse of Scripture are marked good. The number of good readers is 1,844; the number of moderate readers is 1,561: total, 3,405.

In writing was taken an easy sentence, such as "Sweet is the day of sacred rest," or "This is the day the Lord hath made." Those who could write either of these readily were marked good. To obtain the mark of moderate, the word "swerve," or "charm," or "very" had to be written.

I renew my suggestion of last year ouching the use of "script alphabets," for the grounds of that suggestion and matters of detail con-

nected with the use of them, beg to refer to my Reports of 1866 and 1867.

Writing.—Good writers, 1,844; moderate writers, 1,561: total 3,405.

Scripture.—In my examination of Scripture I take a meagre outline of the great facts of the Old Testament and a fuller statement of the history of our Lord. Many children are ignorant of the most prominent Scripture facts. The difficulty of impressing remote facts on the memories of obtuse minded children by exclusively oral teaching will be very obvious to all persons of reflection, but the task is rendered still harder by the way in which it is frequently attempted. In the first place, the narrative is not always expressed with distinctness; in the second place, too much is attempted; and in the third place, the questioning, which is the most important, is not done with sufficient discrimination. The hands should be raised when the questions are put, and one or more should be selected from the number to give the answer. By such a method it will be readily found who and how many have benefited by the lesson. The question *may occasionally be repeated*, and a chorus of replies permitted, in order to give animation to the class. I strongly recommend "Peep of Day," "Line upon Line," and the whole of this series. Of age for examination, 7,283. Number marked good, 1,314; number marked moderate, 1,462: total, 2,776.

Arithmetic.—Addition, 3,119; subtraction, 1,483; multiplication, 1,366; short division, 635; long division, 188. Money: Addition, 253; subtraction, 126; multiplication, 188; division, 92; long division, 18.

NOTATION.

This is a difficult but a very necessary matter. A child ought to be able to write a number of four figures readily. I have suggested that the lesson on notation should be shorter, that it may be taken more frequently. One sum daily, at least, should be dictated to the class. If this were done in the addition class, beginning with one column of figures, and proceeding up to four, the knowledge would be acquired almost insensibly. Number of children who did three figures, 2,345; number of children who did four figures, 1,421. Tables: Multiplication, 1,779; money, 1,066.

I have given attention to the class attending the Schools, and in cases where my suspicion has been excited, have made especial inquiry both of the child and the teacher. In most instances I have found my suspicions unfounded. I had been led by the tidy and cleanly appearance of the child to misjudge the condition of the parent. Most frequently the decent poor are found to be the poorest of the poor.

There is a certain class of children in our Schools that require especial attention, viz., such whose parents are unable to pay through being out of work. The emergency in some cases is only temporary, the relief therefore should be temporary also. Against their names in the register a special mark should be put, and periodically the circumstances of the parents should be inquired into.

I think it would be well if a Visiting Committee were appointed by each Local Committee to examine once a month into such matters.

Miss Marriage removes to her Day School such as she deems unfit for the Ragged School. In the Whitechapel Schools, Rev. J. Cohen does the same, and so of several other Schools with which the clergy are connected. In

Wilkie Street the missionary visits every case, and only when duly certified is the child admitted. In Brunswick Street, also, and several others, the same plan is adopted. In several Schools the admissions take place at a specified time only, and then by one or more members of the Committee. In some cases the teachers admit on their own responsibility. This is very unadvisable. A protest has been made by me against it. In Philpot Street I had to request the dismissal of ten children.

Time Tables are on the increase, but are not generally adopted. Some have one, but do not adhere to it—have it frequently out of sight, feeling it to be a fetter. Those who uniformly adhere to it admit its advantage.

Registers of Attendance are increasing. When properly kept they supply a defence against numerous complaints of non-progress, for they show the infrequent attendance.

School Material.—Upon the whole, the Schools have been better supplied this year than formerly.

Black Boards.—I have been many times surprised at finding teachers who have black boards still going on the old jog-trot way of setting copies and sums. It is an unpardonable waste of time, and indicates either incapacity or indifference.

Disturbing Causes. — Some teachers have other duties besides those of teaching—matters affecting the temporal and spiritual condition of the parents. These matters lead to the visits of parents and others during school-time. This is a great evil. For such visits there should be a specified time, either before or after school-time. Some teachers have a quantity of correspondence to get through, or relief-tickets to write. Other teachers, because they give their Saturdays and spare time to extra duties, make free with the school-hours. It is hardly necessary to say that the school-hours are sacred to school-duties, from which all foreign matters should be excluded.

I should like to see prizes offered in the shape of books or certificates of first, second, or third class merit:—for the sound condition and proper use of school-material; for the best arrangement of time; for life and order during teaching; for the largest number of poor wretched children; and for the greatest results.

EVENING SCHOOLS.

There are 41 Boys', 40 Girls', and 33 Mixed Schools under my supervision. Of these 31 are voluntary, 40 are more or less aided by assistants or voluntary teachers; the remaining 43 are unaided except by such assistance as can be obtained from the more advanced scholars. The average attendance for 1868 is about 5,800: number on the books 9,500. In 1862 the number in attendance was 4,300; the increase in attendance is 1,500. In 1862 the number on the books was 6,080; in 1868 the number on the books is 9,587; increased number on the books, 3,507. I should like to see an effort to gather in, if it were only for one evening in the week, more of the crossing-sweepers, sellers of cigar-lights, vagrant boys, the waifs and strays of London, that still elude us. The feeding, which has increased so much of late years, might be occasionally used as a bait for these shy fish.

On the first occasion they might be invited to a supper, at which some short instructive and amusing entertainment should be provided; at its

close they might be told that these suppers and entertainments would take place fortnightly or monthly, that they would be expected to attend School one evening weekly at least, on which occasions tickets would be given to those who came in time and conducted themselves properly, which tickets would, if had for the whole intervening period, entitle the holder to a supper. George Yard on one occasion gave a tea to the outside shoe-blacks. It was a motley gathering, numbering about 150. Out of this gathering grew the Revival Home, Victoria Park, and similar efforts.

Albert Street, Spitalfields, adopted at my instance last year one voluntary evening, and promised to add another this year. Through the influence (I am happy to say) of Mr. John Lloyd, the secretary, the whole operation has become voluntary. To effect this a conference of the Sunday School teachers was held, in which Mr. H. R. Williams presided. Messrs. Lloyd, Gent, Curtis, and the Rev. W. Tyler took part. The proposal to make the effort voluntary was adopted by acclamation, and before the meeting broke up the three superintendents (one for each evening) mustered over seventy teachers among them. The numbers in attendance formerly were 40 to 50; they have now reached 250. The order is capital, the classes of manageable size, and the teaching good. There is an air of life over the whole business. As a rule, the voluntary Schools are large and efficient; to wit, Nichol Street, Elder Walk, Chequer Alley, Moreton Road, Fox Court, &c.

Northey Street, which was conducted by a master, has been taken in hand by voluntary teachers, and has already made marked progress.

Of those Schools having an average attendance over a certain number, say 50, the paid teachers, I would submit, should receive a book prize or a certificate, such as suggested to the day teachers.

We want more fire. Those who attend, or should attend, the Night Schools, have slender interest in education as such; they are mostly attracted by love to the teacher, or from motives of warmth, light, and companionship. They come wearied with the labours of the day; or, having risen early, are not so wide awake as is desirable for profitable mental work. Hence the necessity of alertness on the part of the teacher, and an aspect of cheerfulness upon the whole business of the School. A spirit of enthusiasm must be inspired by the teacher, progress should be ensured to the pupil by taking some small definite portion, and getting him to master it. Matthews's books should be given or sold to elder scholars, so that some easy home work might be done.

The monotony of school routine should be broken by readings, or music, or short lectures. Something of the kind has been attempted at Holloway and Milton Yard. Penny Readings and entertainments are on the increase. I hail their introduction as providing what is a great desideratum for the masses, viz., amusement without sin.

INDUSTRIAL CLASSES.

There are 62, with an attendance of 2,700. The suspicious appearance of some children is greatly due to these Sewing Classes, for a clean and tidy pinafore lends an air of respectability to the poorest. I should be glad to see the elder girls trained to fashion garments and learn something of the mystery of patterns and fitting.

BANDS OF HOPE.

This year the Bands have increased by three, and since 1862 the members have increased 400. Cross Key Court, Bluegate Fields, Buck's Row, George Yard, Hatfield Street, Berners Street, have over 70 members. Chequer Alley has doubled its numbers during the year. Hartshorn Court has, since its commencement, enrolled 600 members. The following gratifying circumstance is very worthy of record. The conductors of the class, finding that many children could not write their names, but had to affix their mark, offered a "Pilgrim's Progress" to all who could in a month write their names and addresses legibly. 167 availed themselves of this offer and secured the prize.

MOTHERS' MEETINGS.

Every Ragged School in North and East London has either one of these useful meetings, or the mothers are gathered by the clergy into some meeting which embraces a whole district.

Two have been established during the year, one at London Fields and one at Motley Street. These are valuable, not only for the direct object aimed at, viz., the use of the needle, but for the word in season that is agreeably insinuated.

SANITARY.

Most of the Schools are in a good sanitary condition, or at least have the means of being so. During the hot summer I have had frequent occasion to call attention to the state of the closets. I should like to see on the walls some sanitary mottoes, such as were suggested in a previous report. Nearly all the Schools had a good coat of whitewash at Midsummer. George Yard had one or two alterations made for light and ventilation.

Several of the Schools avail themselves, as in former years, of the kindness of the Ladies' Sanitary Association, and visit the parks once or twice weekly.

OLD SCHOLARS' MEETINGS.

These most pleasant gatherings took place in connection with Clare Market, Charles Street, Drury Lane, Whitecross Place, Cross Key Court, and Lamb and Flag. These gatherings are very interesting and very encouraging, as by them a great deal of otherwise hidden fruit is brought to light.

Many of the males, it appears, have risen to positions of respectability; and many of the females have respectably married; several of whom, also, are members of Christian churches. At Clare Market twelve of the oldest were presented with Bibles. At Drury Lane the gathering was of females only; 33 attended, some of whom help the teacher in the Week Evening School.

EDUCATIONAL AUXILIARIES.

Among these may be enumerated Flower Shows, Industrial Exhibitions, visits to places of instruction, such as the Polytechnic, British Museum, Zoological Gardens, trips into the country, school entertainments, such as Readings, Pictorial Exhibitions and Dissolving Views, and the sale of pure literature. One or two experimental depots for the sale of periodicals have

been established by the aid of your Committee. That of Lamb and Flag was established in May. The sale has been such that £1 10s. has been turned over five times. Brunswick Street School disposes of about 1,100 yearly; Gun Street about the same number.

FLOWER SHOWS.

Besides district shows, in which the Schools join, they have been held in Ferdinand Place, Kentish Town, and Nichol Street. These were a great success. The Nichol Street display was more remarkable as an Industrial Exhibition. The specimens of ingenuity and skill were numerous. Above one hundred prizes were distributed.

PENNY BANKS.

The number is 56; depositors 10,000; amount contributed, about £3,900; remaining at Christmas, £651.

CHILDREN'S DINNERS.

As many as twenty or thirty in one morning have been known to come fasting, says Fox Court, and other Schools could bear similar testimony. Through the kindness of friends a breakfast of bread and milk and a daily dinner has been provided in the school-room for the poor hungry ones.

Last winter nearly all the Schools did something. Several Schools were conspicuous. George Yard from November to April gave 36,000 meals; Brewer's Court, 3,385 meals; Hartshorn Court, 10,428 dinners. Clare Market from October to April gave 3,068 substantial dinners of meat and potatoes, and 2,264 meals of soup and bread. Chequers Alley gave 11,000 meat dinners, and 2,000 soup suppers; and Lamb and Flag 5,000 meals. Hatfield Street was used by the East London Relief Committee for the district. Milton Yard gave a substantial Christmas dinner to sixty families, two quarts of soup and bread to 120 families, besides pecuniary help to big lads out of work.

HELP IN SCHOOLS.

The ladies of a certain section of the Church of England are much given to school work. Some Day Schools are entirely conducted by them. I should be glad to see their example more widely imitated. Teachers need help. At Hornsey Road, Ingram Place, Fox Court, Sanford Lane, and Elder Walk, this help is systematic. At Fox Court a gentleman gives his whole time to the School. At Cross Key Court a lady gives three hours in the middle of the day to a School of her own gathering, and another devotes four or five days weekly to the Schools in Shoreditch, Motley Street, and Stepney.

From a review of the year, I feel that we have every reason to be glad that the old fire is still burning—that we still have a host of friends whose hearts are still stout in the cause; but the cry still arises, as it did of old in the vision of St. Paul, "Come over and help us." The harvest, truly, is great, but the labourers are few; let us therefore pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth more labourers into his harvest.

OUR PAID TEACHERS' EXCURSION.

On Saturday, July 3rd, the Committee of the Ragged School Union for the fifth time invited the masters and mistresses of the affiliated Schools to spend a day with them at Bushey Park. In addition to one of the Vice-Presidents, many of the Committee and the officials assisted at this happy gathering. Two hundred and fifty-three of these earnest workers in the crime-gardens of London were present.

When the tent was reached, prayer and praise was offered to Him who had preserved them from all the dangers incident to their calling during the past year. Mr. Gent briefly explained the object of the Committee in thus conveying the teachers away from the smoke and din of London. After sight-seeing, a plentiful dinner was served. Mr. Watts gave a brief address after tea. After the thanks of the teachers were expressed to the Committee of the Central Society for their extreme kindness, the party left for the Teddington Station, and all arrived home safely.

A cloud was cast over this otherwise happy gathering by the serious illness of Mrs. Gent, which caused Mr. Gent to stay only a short time. We regret to add, that this excellent lady departed this life on the succeeding Monday. A true friend of the poor, and an assiduous labourer in her own special sphere, Mrs. Gent was honoured by all for that "faith which worketh by love."

Poet's Corner.

THE REAPERS.

Reapers, reapers, haste—
  Your Master's voice is calling:
Reapers, reapers, haste—
  The golden grain is falling.

Fields already white,
  Rejoicing now with gladness,
Shine with summer light;
  O reapers, banish sadness.

Haste! no more delay
  The weakest grain to cherish:
Hear your Master say
  He wills not one should perish.

Bought with Jesus' blood,
  The weakest is a treasure
Made by God for good,
  For glory without measure.

Why, then, reapers, sleep?
  Your sheaves you soon shall carry;
Harvest joys are deep—
  No longer, reapers, tarry.

Sickles quick put in.
The shades of eve are falling;
Ere the night begin,
Obey your Master's calling.

Work while it is light,
And wait not for the morrow;
Work, before the night
Brings sin, and shame, and sorrow.

Up, then, let us reap,
Though darkest clouds may lower;
Faint not, He will keep
Us safe midst storm and shower.

Lord, we bend the knee
In faith, and love, and prayer;
Lord, we work for Thee—
On thee cast all our care.

Teachers' Column.

APT TO TEACH.

The Southwark Sunday School Society was founded by that earnest evangelist the Rev. Rowland Hill. It now includes thirteen Schools, with upwards of 500 voluntary teachers, and about 6,000 scholars. In five of these buildings Ragged Schools are conducted, with above 1,600 scholars, who are taught by 155 teachers.

At a recent meeting of this Society, which was held in Harrow Street Ragged School, the Rev. J. V. Charlesworth delivered an address to the teachers of the united Schools. From this we extract the following hints for those who need them. The topic selected was, "Apt to Teach."

Mr. Charlesworth remarked that aptness to teach demanded certain personal qualifications in the teacher—acquaintance with the material he had to work upon, a knowledge of the tools to be employed, and the use of right methods.

Speaking of the requisite personal qualifications, he referred to those of heart, intellect, and character. In the heart there must be love to God, and love for the souls of the children. In the intellect there should be capacity, a respectable knowledge of things in general, and of the Bible in particular.

In respect to character, habits of punctuality were requisite. Some teachers forgot to wind up their watches on Saturday night. A superintendent might often apply to his teachers a prayer which Rowland Hill once offered for his congregation: "Lord bless those who are in their places; have mercy upon those who are on the road; and save those who are getting ready to come."

In respect to "acquaintance with the subjects," the speaker said no two scholars were alike. There were dull and slow children who belonged to the age of stage-coaches; there were bright and sharp lads whose mental movements reminded one of an express train. Instruction should be wisely adapted to every type of childish character.

Then, too, it was necessary to have knowledge of the right instruments, and

how to wield them. Language should be carefully chosen, for there was no teaching in mere talk. Pronunciation should be attended to, and anything like affectation should be avoided.

Another instrument of great importance was manner. Some people were like hedgehogs with their bristles extended, repelling all who happened to be near; while others were like a magnet, attracting all who came within the sphere of their influence.

The grand instrument, however, was the Word of God. It should be a teacher's endeavour to understand it, to feel its power, and then he would present it to his scholars in such a way that their minds would be informed, their hearts impressed, and their characters formed. The teacher must live the truth, if he would have true power.

Finally, he should be careful to adopt the right method. The right thing must be done in the right way. The teaching should be delicately graduated, and a lesson should never be given without the teacher feeling that he had really taught his scholars something which they had not known before. Teaching might be as varied as the seasons, yet one as the year. Let there be the bracing winds of spring, when the sunshine struggles with the clouds, the beauty and melody of summer, the mellow fruitage of autumn, and the purity of the winter's driven snow. If teachers would but teach the Bible, their lessons would never be lacking in variety.

Children's Gallery.

HOW SOME RICH BOYS HELP A RAGGED SCHOOL.

We are glad to learn that the "Bristol Ragged Society" has just come of age. For twenty-one long years it has been seeking to save the children of thieves and drunkards, and it is not yet tired of its work. But, who ever that really worked for Jesus from the *heart* ever got tired of His service?

In the six Ragged Schools belonging to this Society there are 1,369 scholars. Like London scholars, they do not attend as regularly as their kind teachers wish; for some have to "mind baby," and others, we fear, play truant. Yet every day above 800 are found diving into the mysteries of the "three R.'s"—reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic. Their teachers report many pleasing facts; but perhaps the most interesting is connected with the Ragged School held in Sydney Alley. This School is attended by 120 of the poorest of the poor, and it is doing much to teach them so to live in this world as to reach the city of the Shining ones when they die.

But who do you think find the money to pay rent and the teachers' salaries? Perhaps you say, Why, of course, rich men or kind ladies! No. As you have not guessed aright, we will tell you. The boys who belong to Clifton College pay the expenses of this Ragged School out of their pocket-money. They usually contribute this money after Divine service, in the school-chapel. We are quite sure that by resisting the temptation to spend their money in gratifying appetite they realise what our Lord meant when he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive!"

Ought not a fact like this to stimulate boys and girls whose parents are wealthier not to forget their poor little brothers and sisters? The same Jesus died for the child of the thief or drunkard as died for the children of our beloved Queen. Will you not, then, do your

best, either by giving to or by working in Ragged Schools, to tell those who live in hovels or dens of crime that there are none too poor or too bad for Jesus to love? For it was he that said that "it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish!"

TRUSTY AND TRUE.

Two gentlemen were standing at the door of a hotel in Edinburgh one very cold day, when a little boy with a poor, thin, blue face, his feet bare and red with cold, and with nothing to cover him but a bundle of rags, came and said—

"Please, sir, buy some matches?"

"No, don't want any," the gentleman said.

"But they are only a penny a box," the little fellow pleaded.

"Yes, but you see we don't want any," the gentleman said again.

"Then I will gie ye twa boxes for a penny," the boy said at last.

But then, says the gentleman who tells this story, I found I had no change, so I said, "I will buy a box to morrow."

"Oh! do buy them the night, if you please," the boy pleaded, "I will run and get ye the change, for I am hungry."

So I gave him the shilling and he started away, and I waited for him, but no boy came. But still there was that in the boy's face that I trusted. Well, late in the evening a little boy was brought in, and I saw that it was a smaller brother of this boy that got my shilling, but, if possible, still more ragged and poor and thin. He stood a moment diving into his rags, as if he was seeking for something, and then said—"Are ye the gentleman that bought the matches fra Sandie?" "Yes."

"Weel, then, here's fourpence out a yer shilling. Sandie canna come, he's no weel. A cart ran over him and knocked him down, he lost his bonnet and his matches, and your elevenpence, and both his legs are broken, and he's no weel at a', and the doctor says he'll dee, and that's all he can gee ye noo," and the poor child broke down into great sobs.

So I fed the little man, the gentleman went on to say, and then I went with him to see Sandie. I found that the two little boys lived with a wretched drunken stepmother, their own father and mother being both dead. I found poor Sandie lying on a bundle of shavings. He knew me at once as I came in and said, "I got the change, sir, and was coming back, and then the horse knocked me down, and both my legs are broken, and ho! Reuby, little Reuby, I am sure, I am sure, I am deein, and who will take care of little Reuby?

Then I took the poor little sufferer's hand, and told him that I would always take care of Reuby. He understood me, and had just strength to look at me, as if he would thank me, then the light went out of his blue eyes, and in a moment "He lay within the light of God, like a babe upon the breast, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."—*Free Gospel Magazine.*

Notices of Meetings.

FIELD LANE.

THE twenty-seventh annual meeting of this School was recently held. In the unavoidable absence of the Earl of Shaftesbury, Mr. George Moore presided.

Mr. S. Tawell, the hon. secretary, read the Report. It appeared from the statistical information furnished that the numbers on the books during the past year were as follows:—Nursery for Babies, 56; Infant Free Day School, 200; Girls' Free Day School, 300; Boys' ditto, 274; Night School, Girls in Situations, 96; ditto, Boys in Situations, 200; Elder

Girls' Industrial Class, 300; Elder Boys and Men, Tailoring and Shoemaking, 40; Youths' Institute for Lads in Place, 78; Mutual Improvement Institute, 22; Clothing Society for Day School Children, 12; Mothers' Weekly Meeting, 80; Paid Women's Sewing Class, 80; Bible Schools, 1,750; Ragged Church, 1,000; Evening Service for Parents, 200; Morning Service for Children, 80. Of the boys and girls a considerable number had obtained places during the year. In the Refuges for people of good character the number admitted had been—In the Male Refuge, 103 boys and 3,524 men; in the Female Refuge, 1,895 women; Servants' Training Home, 96; Maternal Society, 33; Band of Hope, 120; Penny Bank, 667. The summer treat to the country had been enjoyed by 750 persons; 1,700 had participated in the winter treat at the School, and a Christmas dinner had been given to 500. The total number benefited during the year had been 14,855. The Committee in their report dealt at considerable length with the several distinct branches of the institute, which had been found to work well. Since the establishment of the Free Schools upwards of 20,000 children had been instructed, nearly 4,000 of whom had been placed out in situations. The receipts for the year had been £4,941 1s. 3d.; the expenditure, £3,634 17s. 2d.; leaving a balance in hand of £1,306 4s. 1d. The building debt, although reduced by £500 during the year, was £1,500. Although the Committee had exercised the strictest economy in every department, the payments had only been accomplished by means of legacies, and the Committee hoped that increased efforts would be made by the friends of the institution to enable that liability to be got rid of. The report, in conclusion, congratulated the subscribers upon the satisfactory results accomplished by the institution, and gave expression to the hopes of the Committee that with God's blessing it would continue to prosper.

The meeting was addressed by Hon. A. Kinnaird, M.P., Mr. A. Charley, M.P., Rev. Drs. Brock and Edmonds, A. Mursell, and S. Wainwright; and Messrs. R. Baxter, G. Hanbury, and Joseph Payne.

LOCK'S FIELDS.

THE annual meeting of the School in Salisbury Row, Lock's Fields, was recently held. The Rev. W. Alderson presided, supported by Rev. H. Buck, W. Flack, T. J. Turquand, and G. Wyard, &c., &c.

The Report was read by the secretary, Mr. Dallimore, from which it appeared that in August last an offer was made by Mr. Wales, the owner of some property in Lock's Fields, near Townsend Street, to grant a piece of land on a long term. The result of the negotiations with that gentleman was that on the 31st of October last he made a formal offer to grant a lease of a piece of land large enough for a School, for a term of 99 years, at a ground rent of 40s., the Committee to erect a building worth £500, and on his part a gift of £100 towards the cost, and a subscription for two years of £10 a year. This offer was to remain open until the 31st December last (two months) to enable the Committee to ascertain their position. They immediately took steps for the collection of funds, and on the 6th January last, at a meeting of their friends, who had been collectors, a sum of £250 was placed in their hands. This at once determined the Committee to close with Mr. Wales. The total cost of the building, which, when finished, will accommodate about 300 children, with furniture, fittings, and accessories, is estimated at something less than £650. The financial statement was then given by the treasurer, from which it appeared that the Committee had in hand and promised at the commencement of the day, about £415. There had been collected on the stone and in the ground in the afternoon £43, leaving about £190 yet to be collected to pay the whole estimated cost of building, furniture, &c., £650.

Papers, Original and Selected.

SOCIAL STATUS OF RAGGED SCHOLARS.

For some time past, Ragged Schools have been permitted to carry on their home missionary labour without any overt opposition. As no other plan has even been suggested for the social reclamation of the wild tribes of our great cities, the fact has been taken for granted that Ragged Schools are the only means to prevent evils which imperil the very existence of society. This has often rendered our platform-advocacy somewhat tame; for, with a general chorus of praise, we scarcely knew what to advance in behalf of a system the value of which everybody admitted.

Occasionally we heard—not on the platform, where the enemy could be met, but in private—an under-current of doubt as to whether Ragged Schools were really restricted to the right class. This shadowy doubt has, however, found a mouth-piece in a speech lately delivered by Mr. J. Martin, and supported by the Rev. U. Davies, at a meeting of the "Church of England Education Society." That we may not be accused of misrepresenting his statements, we copy them from the *Rock*. Our chief opponent said that—

"Some time ago he visited a man who was in a dying state, for the purpose of giving him some temporary relief. That man had been in a respectable warehouse for twenty-four years. His son, eighteen years of age, who was standing by his bedside, was employed in the same warehouse, and he stated that when he was apprenticed he could neither read nor write. He had a brother fourteen years of age, and a sister eleven years of age. The brother was an errand-boy in the warehouse in which his father was employed, and neither he nor the girl had received any education but that which they obtained at a Ragged School in the neighbourhood. The man was carried to the workhouse by his wife and his eldest son, both of whom were drunk, and the man himself had gin poured down his throat to enable him to bear the removal, and died in their presence. That man spent so much in drink, and was so indifferent as to the education of his family, that he would not send the children anywhere except to the Ragged School. Instances of that kind were very numerous, and it was most painful to see children sent to these Schools when there was ample accommodation in good, inspected Schools. When these Ragged Schools were carried on in attractive premises, he feared they often did more harm than good, for children could go

there at any hour they pleased, and were not under the necessity of attending regularly. Mr. Davies confirmed the statements of Mr. Martin, and expressed his opinion that Ragged Schools materially interfered with other and better Schools."

Were the fact implied by this speech correct, that children who attend Ragged Schools would go to pay Schools were it not for their attractiveness, then we should be dumb before our opponent. But, strange to say, the very case which is cited against us proves our position; for he refers to a man who earned fair wages, but who spent his all in the gin-palace; living a life of sin and misery and ultimately dying the drunkard's death in a workhouse. The whole time his children were neglected and starved; and, had it not been for the despised Ragged School, they must have copied his infamous example, and thus have become pests of society. Instead, then, of showing the evils of Ragged Schools, our opponent supplies a potent proof of their usefulness; and thus he who, Balaam-like, came to curse, ends in blessing. For why were Ragged Schools originally established? Not merely to take charge of the children of the destitute classes, but also to release from parental misguidance the children of the drunkard, the idler, and the thief; in the hope that, instead of being trained for Satan, we might train them for God.

All who have watched Ragged Schools from the outset know that they were originally devised for the benefit of two distinct classes—namely, children whose parents were too poor to pay a school fee, and those whose parents were too vile to pay for schooling. And of those two classes many years' experience leads to the inference, that the latter are the most difficult to tame. Nay, we might go further and give many striking cases to prove that these poor children of neglect form the very staple of the dangerous classes. We have known many a thief or harlot who shuddered at the very thought of their offspring following their evil example; but we have rarely heard of a drunken, idle father and mother who cared what became of their children; nay, too many initiated their little ones in sin, in order that they might obtain money to gratify their vicious propensities. Such cases are common in London and in all our great cities; and, alas for society, if their children are ejected from our Ragged Schools!

But Mr. Martin goes a step further, and says that it is "most painful to see children sent to these Schools when there is ample accommodation in good inspected Schools." This implies, if it

means anything, that children attend Ragged Schools who ought and would go to pay Schools were they refused admittance into our Schools; in other words, that the managers knowingly admit the wrong class. When to *assert* is to *prove*, then shall we be prepared to plead guilty to this charge in the indictment, but till then we must totally deny the allegation. The Central Society, which has the oversight of the London Ragged Schools, takes every possible precaution to restrict the attendants to the children of those parents who cannot, or who will not, pay a school fee, however small. Thus the last, or Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, whilst referring to the fact that the week-day attendance had increased about 2,000, truly says that—

"This increase has not arisen from any relaxation of the rules of admission, nor from any want of vigilance on the part of the School Agents to keep the Schools to the really needy class, nor from any negligence of the clergy to transfer the improved scholars of the Ragged School to upper Schools, for such in this case the National and British School may be designated. The increase, it is feared, has been mainly caused from the want of employment, and many families have consequently descended to a lower social status, and the children obliged to go to a free School or to none at all. The attendance of such children at the Ragged School will be considered as temporary, and as soon as a favourable turn in trade comes, and the parents are again fully employed, efforts will be made to induce these to again attend their own Schools, and leave the Ragged School to deal with its own legitimate class. The Committee watch with a jealous eye the attendance at all the Day Schools, for their desire is that the Ragged School should in no case supersede those where payment is required, but that it should be a *feeding School*, not only in the sense of giving food to the hungry, but in that of supplying scholars to neighbouring Schools as fast as practicable."

But the Central Society does not merely lay down the principle that, if the wrong class are *knowingly* permitted to attend Ragged Schools, there is a gross fraud on the public; but they instruct their School Agents to narrowly watch the social status of those admitted. The following extracts from their last annual reports show that these instructions are fully carried out, and cases of imposition excluded. Thus the senior School Agent says:—"During the past year I strictly examined the class admitted. Thus my journal shows that 67 cases in 16 Day Schools were examined by your Agent, of whom 36 were excluded. This makes 212 cases personally investigated during the past three years, of whom 80 were at once excluded, as above the class." The other School Agent thus reports:—"I have given attention to the class attending the Schools, and in cases where my suspicion has been

excited, I have made especial enquiry both of the child and the teacher. In most instances I have found my suspicions unfounded. I had been led by the tidy and cleanly appearance of the child to misjudge the condition of the parent. Most frequently the decent poor are found to be the poorest of the poor." Both paid teachers and the local committee—many of these local clergymen—act cordially with the officers of the Ragged School Union and cases of deception, when detected, are at once excluded, and the mothers publicly rebuked for their crime.

But an important question remains which cannot be overlooked; namely, what becomes of the excluded children? As a preliminary to our reply, we think it right to intimate that the Central Society has always regarded Ragged Schools as feeders of Schools of a higher social grade. If we had full statistics, we doubt not that it would be seen that this principle has been carried out to a remarkable extent. For example, it was shown in the evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons on "The Education of Destitute Children," that ten Day Ragged Schools alone had sent no less than 350 scholars to British or National Schools. If the other Ragged Schools had supplied such information, we may infer how large the aggregate would have been. This plan is still carried out to a large extent, and the School registers show that month by month, year after year, the teachers transfer scholars to pay Schools, as soon as their parents can either afford it, or are so reformed as to be ashamed to lay this burden on the public. Glad shall we be to record many similar cases, more especially as it will serve to show that Ragged Schools have had such a reflex influence on the parents as to awaken them to a sense of their own responsibilities.

Here it may be mentioned that attempts have occasionally been made to change free into pay Schools, usually with the most signal failure. One case which occurred last year may be cited; it refers to the Church Place School, which is planted in the very heart of the dust yards of Paddington. This week-night School was changed into a penny-a-week School. As the Agent intimated would be the case, three-fourths immediately left the School; and even from those who remained, the fee was obtained with difficulty. By the advice of the Agent, the free plan was resorted to this winter, and the attendance has resumed its former average.

This paper would not be complete unless we referred to another remark of Mr. Martin. He says that "when Ragged Schools

are carried on in attractive buildings, he feared that they often did more harm than good." What he means by "*attractive* buildings," we are at a loss to guess; for this we know, that a large proportion of the London Ragged Schools are conducted in *adapted* buildings, and not in rooms expressly built as Ragged Schools. Even those which were built as Ragged Schools are so free from extraneous ornament, that we are sure that they would not "attract" the admirers of Gothic or Italian architecture. They are light and airy and cheerful, and that is all; and surely any one who knows how much light and air are conducive to health would not wish for anything less.

Whether, as our opponent insinuates, Ragged Schools "do more harm than good," it is for the public, who so freely gives its money for their support, to decide. We do not for a moment wish to compare them with "inspected Schools" as respects secular learning; but even in this respect, remembering the low social strata amongst which we labour, they may well bear comparison. That the inspected Schools, for some reason, do fail, notwithstanding their great cost compared with that of Ragged Schools, the statistics just supplied by the Government enquiry prove. By the last report of the Privy Council on Education, it appears that of the 467,280 scholars on the books of ten years of age, 38·3 per cent. were not presented for examination. Of the 288,027 who were tried, the examination showed 35·2 per cent. of insufficient attainments, only 33·6 per cent. passing without failure above the third "Standard," which requires them to be able to read a short paragraph from an elementary reading-book used in the School, to write a sentence from the same paragraph slowly read once, and then dictated in single words, and to work a sum in any simple rule not beyond short division. The returns show that of two-thirds of the scholars over ten, and therefore about to leave School, either no account or an unsatisfactory one is given by an examination of the most elementary kind.

The object of Ragged Schools has from the first been primarily missionary. Government Schools may possibly manufacture good citizens—but even that is to be proved; whilst our aim has been to make, not merely good citizens of this world, but of the better country. That we have done both, facts too patent to be refuted fully prove. Myriads of the dangerous classes, "whom no man could tame," have bowed their stubborn hearts before the story of the Cross; and many an "heir of salvation" has been found deep

down in the moral mine, who now adorns that gospel which raised him from social degradation and moral ruin. In spite, then, of Sadducee and Pharisee, we shall proceed with our work, believing that in thus going out into highways and byeways—amongst haunts of crime or dens of infamy—we but obey the command of Him who bade us invite the moral halt, lame, and blind to the marriage supper of the Lamb!

CAIRO MISSION SCHOOL.

BY MISS E. J. WHATELY.

It was with a curious mixture of strangeness and familiarity that I walked for the first time up the narrow street to the pretty arabesque-carved archway over which the name of "English Mission School" is inscribed in English and Arabic, and, passing up the narrow court which forms the boys' playground, ornamented by a single *nebbuk* or jujube tree, whose small dark glossy leaves form a pleasing shade, entered the large *feggah* or antehall, which serves as a schoolroom for the 170 boys who daily assemble under the superintendence of Messrs. Shakoor.

It is with the girls, however, that our friends have mainly to do, and I must not therefore detain them by more than a glance at the circle of young faces in the red fez caps, with complexions of every hue, from the ebony negro and copper-coloured Nubian to the fair-haired Syrian from Aleppo. I must lead the way up the narrow, dusty stairs,—yes, I must confess they are, in spite of every effort, often so; and could your readers see the clouds of dust which seem to accumulate in every corner, as if by magic, they would hardly wonder, especially where such inefficient war is waged upon it by the grim-looking blue-mantled female who rejoices in the inappropriate name of "Zarifa," or "Pretty," and comes from time to time to squat on the stone floor and dabble feebly with the masses of dirt which seem to grow as fast as they are displaced.

But we have stayed too long on the stairs; we have another large *feggah* to enter, with three rooms opening into it, these being appropriated respectively to the three classes. Sufficiently bare, though tidy and orderly, are these rooms. No apparatus but benches, a desk for books, copies, etc., and a few maps on the wall; but no deficiency of life or animation in the bright circle of little faces who peep forth under their variously coloured veils, and many of them start up to salute the stranger. This, the first and most advanced class, is managed by a Coptic teacher, Noor, a steady young person, with true Egyptian physiognomy, and grave, quiet, but placid mien. Her pupils are of all nationalities, Moslem, Copt, Greek, Syrian; their names would make an amusingly varied catalogue: a fair-haired slender little Greek Cleopatra stands next a homely, steady-looking Coptic Martha; then we have a black-eyed bright little Syrian Zenobia, whose brow, however, can now and then cloud over much as her imperial namesake's must have done when she followed the conqueror's chariot-

wheels. Every variety of rank is seen here, from the rich merchant's daughter to the poor rag-seller's little girl, who came in from the dirty street, and had to be given a long lesson in the use of soap-and-water.

The girls of the next class, the least advanced, are chiefly Moslems, and for the most part very poor. Very many ragged veils and scanty dresses are to be seen, but quite as intelligent faces and bright eyes, and quite as ready answering, when the slender pale little pupil-teacher, Fatmeh, herself a Moslem, puts them through the questions in their simple catechism. They will answer questions as to the leading facts in the Old Testament with any set of school children in England, and no little one but can answer "Scidna Issa," "Our Lord Jesus," when asked who it is saves us from our sins.

The third and smallest class has also a Coptic teacher. All answer readily, and enter heartily into my sister's teaching when she has leisure to give them a lesson in geography, objects, &c. Their teaching cannot be carried on so far as that of the boys, by reason of the early marriages taking them so soon away; but all they learn they know thoroughly. The afternoon is devoted to needlework; plain sewing is carefully taught, as the first and most important; but embroidery, as offering a means of earning their bread in future, and also as the chief inducement for them to come, is a very needful adjunct. It is presided over by a gentle, sad-looking woman, in a black veil, with a sickly-looking infant in her arms. She is sister to one of the teachers, and stays all day to help keep order. The want of a really efficient teacher for the girls' school is a great burden on my sister, and obliges her to give more time to actual teaching than she can well spare from other avocations connected with the work. Still, it is impossible to look on those seventy or eighty well-ordered and well-taught little ones, and see the kind of life from which they were brought, without feeling that great things have been done.

There was, as you may well imagine, a great excitement when the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales was announced as near. On the expected day the little band of girls, arranged in the lower room for the occasion, looked like a bed of flowers, so various and brilliant were their costumes. Those who were too poor to boast of much holiday trim borrowed articles from kind neighbours or relatives; my sister found a bright piece of yellow chintz for the poor rag-seller's child who had no one to contribute finery for her; so we had a parterre of gay colours, gauze veils of violet colour, pink, scarlet, bright apple-green; vests and trousers (or *yeleks*) of every colour of the rainbow; every now and then a little Syrian appearing in a smart European frock, and bead net on her head, not nearly so becoming. Gold coins, beads, coral, etc., were mustered to the utmost extent of their powers, and hung wherever they could be hung. All were on the tiptoe of expectation—the boys ranged outside, also in "coats of many colours," and all looking fresh and neat. At last, after a weary waiting, the shouts from those at the gates announced the arrival of the Prince and his aide-de-camp. He walked up the court, and kindly apologised for the Princess's absence, as she was much fatigued and busy. He went through both schools, though of course the boys' had the most to interest him; heard them read English and answer questions in geography, inspected their writing, and expressed himself well pleased with all. The faces of the girls did a little fall when they

found that the Princess, of whom they had heard so much, and the name of whose city, Copenhagen, difficult to their eastern tongues, they had so diligently tried to master, was not there. But they were not to lose this pleasure. Scarcely were my sister and I, after the kind and courteous farewell of the Prince, returned to the house, when a breathless messenger from the School brought the news that the Princess had arrived. In very quick time we were again there, and had the pleasure of showing her the girls' department entire. It being Saturday, most of the boys had left after the first visit. But the little faces looked very bright as the sweet figure of their expected visitor appeared among them. Her admiration of the pretty embroidery, nicely arranged for inspection, was all we could have desired (she purchased some specimens), and the questions she asked showed a real and cordial interest. She was pleased to hear of so many reading the Scriptures, and of Copts and Moslems being taught to live together in mutual love and goodwill.

Altogether nothing could be more gratifying than her visit, and it was with cheered hearts that we received her kind and graceful farewells, and as the carriage drove off saw the children all ranged round the *feggah*, to close the school as usual with the simultaneous recitation of the Ten Commandments.—*Abridged from Female Missionary Intelligencer.*

INFINITE RESOURCES.

Consulting a friend, says a writer in *Christians at Work*, one day in regard to some poor people in the neighbourhood whom we had proved to be unworthy of confidence, he said in the course of conversation: "I declare, there is such an endless catalogue of them; I do get sick and tired, and feel as if I hadn't any patience left."

"You call it," I replied, "an endless catalogue, and yet think what a small portion of the whole they are. The thought that God knows every one of that great whole, even to the smallest details—seeing all the suffering all the unworthiness, yet bearing it all—gives one an idea of his infinite patience, which is almost heartrending; for it fairly melts one's soul to contemplate it."

"Yes," replied my friend, "his is infinite patience; but then we must remember he has infinite resources, which we have not."

He left me pondering his last assertion. That God has "infinite resources" is certainly true; that we have not, in our own nature, is equally true; but that through our glorious Saviour those resources are ours, is as true as either.

There is no limit to the supply of grace and power which a Christian may draw from God's infinite treasure-house. We have no right to excuse ourselves for lack of patience, or love, or any other grace. In God is all, more than all we need; and it is ours, purchased for us by Christ. He bought with his priceless blood an absolute right to these "infinite resources" for us. If we but have faith, the hand which is extended to receive from this treasury, we may have patience which will never fail, courage which will never falter, zeal which will never slacken, and love which shall burn on in a still brighter flame, consuming all selfishness, all earthliness, in its pure glow,

until that glorious day shall come when "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

This belief is founded upon God's Word. Hear our Saviour's declaration to his disciples: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also." This included a promise to them of power to work miracles such as he wrought—healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead. For such "works," probably, the age is past; but surely this word is to us the pledge of a limitless supply of grace to follow him in his perfect submission, his unwearying patience, his tender love, if we "believe on him."

O fellow-Christians, do you realize that you need never be overwhelmed by your exceeding poverty and weakness? His riches are yours, his strength is your own.

"Let him take hold of my strength," says your Lord. Prove him and see if you will not find yourself "strengthened with all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." Do not feel as if the thought was presumption. It is not presumption to take God at his word. The Lord told Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." If that grace was not to be his, the glorious assurance was valueless. But it was his, and feeling its full power, he cried, "When I am weak, then am I strong."

That is the secret. Come in utter weakness and helplessness, in absolute self-distrustfulness, to Him who is strong. Throw yourself upon his love, his infinite, never-failing love. He knows all, "for that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." To live this life of trust and faith, receiving constantly infinite grace and strength, Jesus must be your all. You must live to him, for him, in him. He has the key of the storehouse. "My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Believing this, claiming the promise, "looking to Jesus" constantly, unwaveringly, you will say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me;" for "in everything ye are enriched by him."

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

NEARLY a century ago an offshoot of the great Methodist revival sprung into vigorous life under the name of "The Christian Community." Its general object was workhouse visitation; in other words, to a class who from age or infirmity, require much tenderness if the heart is to be reached. Open-air preaching, under authorised but unpaid agents, was also successfully carried on. More recently the visitation of the "lodging-houses for travellers," in the Mint and elsewhere, was added to these plans of usefulness, with manifest tokens that God is with the visitors.

After a century of hard work, the Christian Community is still labouring with the zeal of its youth. At a recent meeting of the members, 125 in number, it was stated that several workhouses are constantly visited. The work of the visitors embraces the halls, the sick, infirm, and able-bodied, male and female, wards. In the halls at some of the houses, the visitors have large audiences, and they are described as being orderly and well conducted.

Many anxious ones have also been met, who have readily told the visitors of their doubts and fears, and with deep earnestness have inquired what they must do to be saved. In all such cases the needful sympathy, direction, and encouragement have been gladly tendered, not without evidence of its having been blessed to the encouragement of some and the good of all. In the sick and other wards the visitors have read the Scriptures, offered prayer, and given a short address or exposition. When there is no bad case of sickness, one or two hymns are sung, as this exercise is always pleasing. Then at the close of this, and in going from bed to bed with tracts, kind inquiries are made after the health and condition of each, followed up by the direct question as to whether they have found, or are seeking to find, the Saviour? This often leads to a lengthened conversation in which many confessions of guilt have been made, doubts and fears stated, with obstacles and objections of all kinds, including every phase of scepticism and infidelity.

Then, again, there are stories of former days of prosperity, of a gradual descent to poverty, and finally to the workhouse, accompanied by deep sorrow and penitence. The visitor, therefore, has enough to do, to give advice and direction suitable to every case. In all the workhouses, however, in which upwards of sixty visitors are at work, there have been many signs that this branch of the society's operations is one of the most useful.

The lodging-houses have now been visited by members of the Community for more than fifteen years. In Spitalfields, every Sunday night, about twenty persons occupy themselves in going through the district. In this vicinity, in a very small area, are found forty-five lodging-houses with more than 2,000 lodgers, of every grade. A great change has come over this district when compared with its condition years ago. It used to be counted dangerous to go alone through any of the streets; but the members of the Community may now enter any of the lodging-houses, and preach the Gospel to as attentive an audience as can be found in the ward of a workhouse. As a rule, their visits are readily permitted, and in many cases even solicited. A service is conducted, and at its close the visitor goes round with tracts and speaks a kind word to each as he hands him one, after which a kindly "good night" is wished on both sides. In connection with their lodging-house work, the members have during the past year held six free tea-meetings, especially for the inmates of the houses in Spitalfields. The poor people were on each occasion well regaled with the necessary refreshments, and kindly addresses were delivered to them.

The society has also engaged in open-air preaching at more than a dozen stations, and they are not without proof that much good has resulted from the hundreds of addresses which were delivered. The numbers attending these open-air services have been much greater than in any former years, and the attention paid to the speakers, and the decorous conduct of the people attending, have been all that could have been desired. Interruptions have occasionally occurred by drunken people, or by Romanists, but the people have invariably protected the speaker against all annoyance.

It is to be hoped that a society thus endeavouring to meet some of the gravest wants of the present day will be well supported, not only by funds, but by the co-operation of many Christian young men, for whose energies the society's field of operations offers abundant scope.

HOW TO SUPPRESS MENDICITY.

A CENTRAL organisation has lately been formed in London for dispensing charitable relief upon sound principles, and for repressing mendicity. The chief office is 15, Buckingham Street, Strand. The Earl of Lichfield is chairman of the council, and Captain Maxse hon. sec.

Not long ago conferences were held in the metropolis, and taken part in by representatives of the principal charities, and by Poor-law officials of various grades, to concert measures for putting a stop to mendicity and vagrancy, and thereby to assist charity in discriminating the proper objects for its exercise. It was found that a society whose efforts directly tended to that most desirable result had been working at Blackheath since last December. The scheme upon which it acted was very simple, and the success that had accompanied its operation thorough. To begin with, a central office was opened; next, a charity agent was engaged. This official, who was a man of some experience in the subject, was placed in close communication with relieving officers, police, ministers of religion, and all, in fact, who were supposed to come in contact with the begging fraternity. The householders of the district were supplied with a sheet of perforated tickets, and directions how to use them. As to these there could be little mistake. The mendicant came, begged, and was given one of the tickets, with instructions to take it to the central office. There it was received by the agent, whose duty it was to make inquiries, and act according to his judgment respecting the requirements of the case. He would postpone relief if it was doubtful, and was empowered to grant immediate aid if satisfied that the application deserved and required it. Before this plan had been in action a month, the householders and Poor-law guardians sensibly felt the benefit. The vagrant's calling passed from one state of depression to another, until the trade was ruined.

One of the earliest facts discovered by the committee was that something like 90 per cent. of the beggars who trouble our street doors are impostors. They, of course, were sent empty away, and the alms they would have received under ordinary circumstances applied to worthier objects.

A month ago a society similar to that of Blackheath was founded in the parish of Marylebone. The committee meet weekly at the central office to receive agents' reports. It is insisted that as a rule tickets, and nothing but tickets, shall be given to applicants; the exception being the granting of temporary assistance, according to the agents' discretion, in urgent cases. Applicants "rightly belonging" to the Poor Law Board are at once handed over to the guardians, or to special charities if they have special needs.

The Central Committee regard this system as a useful "economising of the flow of charity." It is hoped that sufficient funds will be forthcoming to supply each parish of the metropolis with a branch committee, for it is evident the scheme cannot be perfect until there is a regular channel of communication through all the districts.

Recently a meeting, under the presidency of Lord Grosvenor, passed a resolution forming a society for the parish of St. George's. A general committee was formed to carry out details. A message of sympathy was sent by Lord Shaftesbury.

A RAGGED SCHOOL INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION.

In connection with Perkins Rents Ragged School, an industrial exhibition and sale of articles made and flowers reared by the children of the School, was recently held at the School, Old Pye Street.

The exhibition arose out of an expression of desire on the part of the Earl of Shaftesbury to see a children's flower show. The motto of the Association was, "I can't—never achieves anything; I'll try—always does something; I will—effects wonders." The sum given in prizes was £5 10s., of which £4 had been gathered through the instrumentality of Lord Shaftesbury.

There were exhibited many most interesting products of the skill of the young workers, the general character of the exhibition being, of course, of a very simple nature, the work being done at the children's own homes. Among the articles were some models, which showed a great natural dexterity, including one of a tinker's barrow, which might almost serve to awaken in the mind of the viewer a cry of "Kettles to mend," every wheel being in its just proportion, with its straps and all the necessary incidentals to that calling which the immortal tinker of Bedford has for ever hallowed with his illustrious patronage. Another was of a cobbler's stall, made by a young boy, and which was very moderately "priced," the value of it being but 1s. 8d. It was entirely carved in a week with a knife, and the tin-tacks, bradawl, and last were all like Wyld's noted maps—so many degrees to an inch. A prize was awarded for an admirable model of a wood-chopper's bench. With another instance of the models, we pass down the heavy-laden tables, and this one is the reverse of the "babes in the wood," being an excellent specimen of a "deal bedstead with furniture, six inches by four inches," as the catalogues would say. But not only so; there are two little doll children in the bed. This instance of the adage of "the child is father to the man," and of childlike ingenuity, it being made by a brother and sister, was purchased for the Marchioness of Westminster, who had entrusted her "commissioner" to lay out £3 among the various articles exhibited. Some specimens of writing and needlework were also shown, and prizes were given for some specimens, and also for two maps of England, which were very accurately drawn. Another article which gained a prize, and several of which were shown, was a "tidy," a veritable *multum in parvo* to the young sempstress, all the implements of her handicraft being found within it. Utility also had evidently been studied—indeed, it was one of the rules that every exhibition of fancy work of any kind should also exhibit some specimen of plain and useful needlework, for there was a large supply of under-clothing, the work of the children, and a neat bonnet formed a unique article in the show, being the production of one of the girls, a former pupil, who is now out at service. Notice is called for also by some interesting specimens of glass-blowing and china-mending art by Mr. J. Williams, the hon. secretary of the working men's club. Many specimens of "leaking articles made sound, and the crack prevented from going any further," found a place in his stall.

There was a large exhibition of plants, the care of the rearing of which

was undertaken by the children, and considering the close lanes and unfavourable sort of atmosphere, the bright appearance of many must be esteemed a real wonder. Many prizes were awarded.

Some valuable oil paintings, the gift of Mr. J. B. Harrison to the working men's club, were also shown, together with another which was at the commencement of the meeting covered.

TAXATION OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

In spite of the open opposition of the officials of both parties—the "ins" and the "outs"—we are glad to report that the Bill introduced to exempt Sunday and Ragged Schools from taxation has, with some modifications, been passed. The campaign, though short, was a warm one. Petitions from all parts of England flooded the House, and more than one division was taken in the House of Commons. We have to thank Mr. C. Reed and other members for their earnest advocacy; Lord Shaftesbury for fathering the Bill in the Upper House; and Mr. E. Towers, who, as hon secretary of the "Sunday and Ragged School Rating Exemption Association," worked hard night and day to achieve this victory of common sense over red-tapism.

The following is the text of the Act to exempt Sunday and Ragged Schools from rating:—

"Whereas for many years and until lately buildings used as Sunday and Ragged Schools for gratuitous education enjoyed an exemption from poor and other rates, and it is expedient that they should be exempted from such liability, be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as following:—

"1. From and after the 30th day of September, 1869, every authority having power to impose or levy any rate upon the occupier of any building or part of a building used exclusively as a Sunday School or Ragged School may exempt such building or part of a building from any rate for any purpose whatever which such authority has power to impose or levy. Provided, that nothing in this Act contained shall prejudice or affect the right of exemption from rating of Sunday or infant schools, or for the charitable education of the poor in any churches, district churches, chapels, meeting houses, or other premises, or any vestry rooms belonging thereto, or any part thereof, by virtue of an Act passed in the third and fourth years of the reign of King William the Fourth, chapter thirty, intituled 'an Act to exempt from poor and church rates all churches, chapels, and other places of religious worship.

"2. A 'Sunday School' shall mean any school used for giving religious education gratuitously to children and young persons on Sunday, and on week days for the holding of classes and meetings in furtherance of the same object, and without pecuniary profit being derived therefrom. A 'Ragged School' shall mean any school used for the gratuitous education of children and young persons of the poorest classes, and for the holding of

classes and meetings in furtherance of the same object, and without any pecuniary benefit being derived therefrom except to the teacher or teachers employed.

"3. This Act shall not extend to Ireland.

"4. This Act may be cited as the 'Sunday and Ragged Schools (Exemption from Rating) Act, 1869.'"

It will be seen that, by the first clause, this Act will practically come into operation on the 1st of October. We doubt not that the committees of Ragged Schools will not permit the Act to become a dead letter, but will so enforce its provisions as to relieve their Schools from a heavy fine. That this may be the case, they should at once bring this statute under the notice of the local taxing authorities.

OUR SCHOLAR PRIZES FOR 1869.

THE Committee of the Ragged School Union, being desirous to encourage good conduct and long-continued service in all who have passed through the Schools of the Union, have again decided on giving prizes to young persons who have kept their situations with good character for twelve months and upwards, and coming within the following conditions:—

1. They must be over twelve and under eighteen years of age.

2. They must have attended the Ragged School giving the recommendation at least six months previously to having entered their first situation.

3. Having kept in one situation for twelve months, they are allowed to make one change, but must not be out of place for more than two weeks; in this case they are eligible for the prize, provided they are in the second place on December 31st, 1869. Certificates of character will be required from both situations.

4. If they have not before received a money prize, they will now be entitled to a prize of seven shillings and sixpence, as well as a card, provided the committee of the School recommending them will pay two shillings and sixpence of this sum.

5. Those who have received a money prize previously, and are again recommended, will be entitled to a prize card, and a book in value not exceeding two shillings and sixpence.

6. They must have been in regular attendance at the Ragged or other Sunday School for the current year. This rule does not apply to female domestic servants.

7. Shoeblacks, occasional labourers, scholars partially employed, those engaged by their relatives, or earning more than ten shillings per week, will not be eligible for the prizes.

8. Certificates must be furnished by the employers and School authorities, to show that these conditions have been complied with, and that good conduct has been continued to December 31st, 1869.

9. The candidate will lose the benefit that might arise from the application, if the application papers be not fully and accurately filled up, duly

signed and returned to the Office, 1, Exeter Hall, on or before January 15th, 1870.

The Prizes may be given in books, clothes, or otherwise, as the Committee of the School may determine; but if given in money, it should be placed to the child's account in a savings bank, with a view to induce provident habits.

1, *Exeter Hall, July*, 1869. JOSEPH G. GENT, *Secretary*.

THE MISSING SCHOLAR.

ON calling over the roll one Sabbath morning in the early spring time before the lessons of the Mission School began, I found one scholar was missing. A certain vague foreboding took possession of my mind, that we should never see her in her seat again, for her health had been sinking, and a cough, deep and hollow, had caused us to fear for her, several weeks before the morning when I called her name but got no response.

After the services of the day I called on Maggie, and found that our fears were well grounded, for she was now evidently in a middle stage of consumption. The doctor had ordered her to go to the country, to try what change of air would do; and as she was to leave town on the following day, I took the opportunity to direct her mind to the interests of her immortal soul.

She could give me no satisfaction about her state, for she seemed not to realise that her body was in danger of death, and her soul in danger of hell. She was, by her own confession, unsaved, but this seemed to trouble her very little; she had no desire, apparently, to seek Christ, for she felt no pressing need. After a few words of earnest counsel and entreaty, I bade her farewell, promising to pray for her, and urging her to pray for herself. When she was gone I kept my promise, and prayed for her, as I would pray for any scholar who, I had reason to fear, would go from my class to a lost eternity.

A few weeks after our parting, I was requested to visit Maggie, who had now returned. I lost no time in doing so, and when I called I found her in the last stage of the disease. She told me that she had come home to die, but it did not matter now, for she had sought and found pardon and acceptance in Christ.

When I expressed my surprise and pleasure at this unexpected change, she told me that after leaving town she had become afraid to die, and that a young friend in the country used to sing hymns about Jesus, until, she said, "I wished I could sing them, and I wished I could think that Jesus loved me." She then, in a simple way, related how she had been led to give herself to Jesus, and ended by saying, "I know now that He died for me."

Her health from this time fast declined. The poor widowed mother that watched by her bedside knew well that she was soon to lose her only child. She was very poor, but friends provided for the dying girl.

One day a little scholar accompanied me to her room and sang several hymns. Maggie begged her to come again and sing more of them to her.

She was very fond of the hymn beginning, "My Jesus, I love thee;" but she said she would like to have all the hymns in the book sung.

A visitor once said to her, "Maggie, you are very weak, for the least exertion makes you sweat." "Oh, that is nothing," she replied, "Jesus sweat drops of blood for me."

To Maggie death had no sting. She testified to us that she longed to depart, and that death was welcome, because it would bring her to Jesus. She afterwards repeated the hymn, "All is well."

Her faith in Christ seemed to grow stronger. At the last we gathered round her bed, to witness, through our tears, the struggle of the spirit to depart and be with Christ. She laid her wasted hand in mine to take a last farewell on earth. "Good-bye Maggie," I said, "we shall meet in a little while on the golden streets." She saw that I looked sadly on her emaciated hand as it lay in mine, and, summoning her remaining strength, she said slowly and in broken accents, "That is for the worms;" then laying her hand on her heart, she added, "But this is for Christ."

So died a poor girl, a scholar in a Ragged School. A few friends buried her to prevent her body being taken to the dead house, and getting a pauper's burial.

RAGGED SCHOOL EXCURSIONS.

Last month we chronicled our paid teachers' excursion; this month it is our pleasing duty to report the annual united excursion of the poorer Ragged Schools.

Most Ragged Schools have had an excursion this summer. The exact number who left the whirl and dirt of London for a day in the country we are unable to report; but, from facts which have come under our notice, we think that not less than 20,000 of our scholars have had such an "outing." The cost of some of these excursions was defrayed from funds collected for this special purpose. A large sum came through the press, which warmly supported the scheme. But a few were given by friends of Ragged Schools, who invited the scholars of Ragged Schools in which they are interested to their country seats. Amongst these Good Samaritans were Sir W. H. Bodkin, Mrs. Pearson, Mr. Angerstein, and Mr. Donald Matheson; who this summer renewed many former favours of this kind.

A residue was however left, chiefly of Ragged Schools in the far East, which were either very poor or less known. For these an appeal was made through a letter kindly written by Lord Shaftesbury, and to this a ready response was made by our leading friends.

On Friday, August 6, nearly 1,700 teachers and scholars proceeded to Petersham Park, either by the South-Western or North London Railway. The South-Western train also conveyed 120 attendants at Brewer's Court "Ragged Church." The cost of conveyance, together with a good dinner and tea, was generously defrayed by Mr. J. Harris, one of the Committee of the Ragged School Union. The Band of the Richmond British School met the excursionists at the station; and the band of Ferdinand Place Ragged

School accompanied the South-Western train, and we need not say, both added much to the pleasure of this red-letter day.

The weather was all that could be desired, and the children enjoyed their holiday as only Cockney children, to whom grass and trees are rarities, can enjoy themselves. All in fact, old or young, became boys and girls for the occasion. The words of Mr. John Plummer, which were sung on a similar occasion, we doubt not fully expressed the feelings of all who were present at this united excursion.

For one sweet day in all the year we've left our ceaseless toil,
To hear the birds and see the flowers that deck the blooming soil;
To ream beneath the pleasant shade of each broad, leafy tree,
And join the fervent chorus loud, "To God the glory be!"

This day no cares, nor doubts, nor fears, our happiness shall stain;
Here we'll forget our sad distress, our poverty and pain;
Here will we dream of joys to come, when Canaan's land we see,
And hear the golden harps resound, "To God the glory be!"

When weak and poor, He found us friends whose words of Christian love
Consoled our hearts, and dried our tears, and bade us look above—
The realms where Christ the Saviour reigns, where grief can never be,
Where shout the white-robed heavenly hosts, "To God the glory be!"

Poet's Corner.

THE LOST CHILD.

"Lost, lost, lost!"
List to the bellman's chime,
As it thrills on the ear with a sadd'ning sound,
Just at the evening time.
A little fair-haired child,
And only four years old,
Has wandered afar in its childish glee
Away from the parent fold.
Who can the anguish tell,
The mingled hope and fear,
As the mother waits in that desolate home
Her darling's voice to hear?

Sad, sad, sad,
The sound of the bellman's chime,
As it rings through the busy, crowded street
Just at the evening time;
But sadder, sadder still,
The cry of deeper woe
Which comes from so many childish hearts
That no earthly comfort know.
'Tis heard in the crowded street,
Mid the city's strife and din,

Where little ones wander with weary feet,
Lost in the ways of sin;
Lost to the voice of love,
To virtue's lessons dear;
Lost to the hope of a home above,
Oppressed with want and fear.

Christian, with pitying eye
These wandering lambs behold,
And gather them all, in their childhood's day,
Into the Saviour's fold.

E. C.

Teachers' Column.

"GREAT PAINS, GREAT GAINS."

BY REV. F. H. ROBARTS.

THE secret of Sunday School success, always assuming dependence upon the Holy Spirit, is just painstaking—that is, good persevering hard work. There is no royal road, no secret or magic by which to acquire success, nothing but the ordinary means: great pains if you would have great gains.

Some think talking and meetings, conferences and committees, are to cure the world of all its ills; certainly if they did the world would ere now have become much better. Their principal good is to urge us to exertion. There is now no new machinery required, but more steam.

Our machinery is excellent and our plan right. What we want is more faith and energy to work it out. If we depend on plans, Satan can beat us in strategy and arrangement. Depend upon it, success is only to be gained by hard work under God's blessing. The battle of Inkermann is called the soldier's battle because it was won by privates without councils of war or the far-seeing plans of generals. So our battle against Satan is the soldiers' battle, and requires personal bravery and hard work. In all painstaking we must assume our entire dependence upon the Holy Ghost.

1. Painstaking is required to keep the faith in a Christian steady and firm. Be sure to maintain faith strong and vigorous. In one respect faith is easy; but it is not so easy to keep the eye fixed on Christ steadily as we go on. As the pilot need keep his eyes on the light for guidance into port, so the Christian requires to keep his eye on Christ, and it takes a great deal of effort to keep it there amidst the business and bustle of the world; unless he does there can be no success in the work.

2. Painstaking is needed to keep personal piety warm and fresh. It is a fact that God often blesses piety more than talent and genius. There is nothing so useful as personal piety, combined with moderate talent. If we flag in prayer and our hands hang down in our closets there can be no success in the work.

3. Painstaking in reading the Bible not only for the class but for ourselves. The most suggestive and profitable thoughts come when studying the Bible for food for ourselves: then it is sensitive for God's impression, and the best thoughts come happiest then. None can be fruitful Christians unless great pains be taken in reading the Bible for personal profit.

4. Painstaking is also required in diligent preparations for the class, and there is need of persistent hard work in studying the Bible for the Sunday School. The teacher's work is like the angler's work: there must be the well-baited hook. Pains must be taken in choice of both hook and bait. Some use hooks

without a bait. There is no genial illustration. Some use baits without hooks. There is nothing to stick in the conscience; nothing to lay hold—all illustration and no point.

5. Painstaking in visiting: some are so lazy as to depute this to others. Some have no time nor inclination. Those that care for souls will make time.

Great gains follow great pains.

1. Efficiency. Aim high and "you will strike high." Those that have risen to eminence had the same Bible, the same Father, the same Holy Spirit as ourselves. They only made more diligent use of the talent committed to them, and thus attained the highest success.

2. The blessing and honour of winning souls. Keep that in view. It is worth any painstaking to win souls. Can you think of the name of any soul you have won? To win one soul is worth living for. It is no slight thing to be the means of making angels' hearts sing for joy. Think of the welcome and reward. Be assured there is no work on earth so profitable or pleasant as winning souls.

3. Through the children you reach the parents. You can never know how many of your words get to the parents; words of yours, repeated by the children, may win the souls of parents.

To secure great gains the teacher must plod, plod, plod, wet and fine. Remember all is right in this battle if the soldiers are right. Do your own work, and let systems take care of themselves. This is the teacher's present duty, and to him great pains will be great gains.

BEAR AND FORBEAR.

A HASTY teacher is always ready to take offence from others, and thereby inflicts misery on himself. What they call in Lancashire a "touchous" man, and in Shropshire a man "who gets into a poor way," is a trouble to all around, but is the greatest trouble to himself. He slights himself because other people slight him. Half the quarrels—far more than half the quarrels—that sometimes unfortunately arise in "Teachers' Meetings," are bred of touchiness.

Now, granted that it is not desirable that a teacher's feelings should be impenetrable, it surely is a general, and, much more, a personal calamity when any one is so sensitive that a passing breath affects him. But we will venture to say that, if an analysis were made of all the offences which have arisen in our Sunday Schools, and their origin were traced, it would be found that in five cases out of six they have sprung out of incidents which could hardly be detailed to disinterested parties without a smile.

Let teachers, for their own sake, as well as for the sake of others, resolve never to be offended with anything but sin. In order to this, let them cultivate the affecting humility of Him who "made Himself of no reputation;" and who said, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find *rest* unto your souls." S.

Children's Gallery.

BEST OF ALL ENVELOPES.

WE have often given striking instances of gratitude on the part of former ragged boys. For example, one sailor boy gave his teacher a beautiful parrot, which he brought from Australia. Another brought a native-carved walking-stick all the way from New Zealand, and gave it to the superintendent of his Ragged School.

We will now give the case of a girl who had once attended a Ragged School.

There she was rescued from starvation and misery, and, what was still better, there she found peace in Jesus. She was recommended to a place as general servant, at eight pounds a year, and every one was pleased with her. One Sunday afternoon she visited the school so dear to her, and, to the surprise of the superintendent, put an envelope in his hand, which contained a ten-shilling piece. She said modestly, that she gave "it as a thank-offering for the good, temporal and spiritual, she had received in the school." She also said, "It is not much; but, sir, I have *wrapped* it up with an earnest prayer and many tears."

Now could she have chosen a better envelope? The "Lord loveth a cheerful giver," whether rich or poor. And we are sure that, when we "wrap" up any gift in prayer and tears, it carries a blessing with it.

Dear young reader, you who are much richer than this poor girl, should you not go and do likewise?

"PLEASE BUY A PAPER."

THERE was nothing new in the words, nothing new to see a small boy with a package of papers under his arm; but the voice, so low and musical—its clear, pure tones, mellow as a flute—called up hallowed memories. One look at the large brown eyes, the broad forehead, the mass of nut-brown curls, the pinched and hollow cheeks, and his history was told.

"What is your name, my boy?" I asked, as, half blinded with tears, I reached out my hand for a paper.

"Johnny ——;" the last name I did not catch.

"You can read?"

"Oh, yes; I've been to a Ragged School," said Johnny, glancing out of the window, to see if there was need of haste.

I had a little brother once, whose name was Johnny. He had the same brown hair and tender, loving eyes; and perhaps it was on this account felt very much disposed to throw my arms around Johnny's neck, and to kiss him on his thin cheek. There was something pure about the child, standing modestly in his patched clothes and little, half-worn shoes, his collar coarse but spotlessly white, his hands clean and beautifully moulded. A long, shrill whistle, however, with another, short and peremptory, and Johnny must be off. There was nothing to choose; my little Testament, with its neat binding and pretty steel clasp, was in Johnny's hand.

"You will read it, Johnny?"

"I will, lady; I will."

There was a movement—we were off. I strained my eyes out of the window after Johnny, but I did not see him; and, shutting them, I dreamed what there was in store for him—not forgetting His love and care for the destitute, tender voiced boy.

A month since I made the same journey, and passed over the same railroad. Halting for a moment's respite at one of the many places on the way, what was my surprise to see the same boy, taller, healthier, with the same calm eyes and pure voice!

"I've thought of you, lady," he said; "I wanted to tell you it's all the little book."

"What's all the little book, Johnny?"

"The little book has done it all. I carried it home, and father read it. He was out of work, then, and mother cried over it. At first I thought it was a wicked book to make them feel so bad; but the more they read it, the more they cried, and it's all been different since. It's all the little book; we live in a better house now, and father don't drink, and mother says 'twill be all right again."

Dear little Johnny! he had to talk so fast; but his eyes were bright and sparkling, and his brown face all a-glow.

"I'm not selling many papers now, and father says maybe I can go to school this winter."

Never did I so crave a moment of time. But now the train was in motion.

Johnny lingered as long as prudence would allow.

"It's all the little book," sounded in my ears; the little book that told of Jesus, and His love for poor perishing men. What a change! A comfortable home; the man no more a slave to strong drink. Hope was in the hearts of the parents; health mantled the cheeks of the children. No wonder Johnny's words came brokenly! From being poor and friendless, the little book told them of One mighty to save, the very Friend they needed, with a heart all love, all tenderness.

Editor's Note-book.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT.

A Calcutta Babû, when he saw some of our officers gambling, and our soldiers and sailors reeling drunk, said sarcastically, "Had we not better form a society to convert the Christians?" Bitter as was the sarcasm, it was not altogether unwarranted, and the following statistics show how much England still needs christianising. For, in addition to our character of being the most drunken nation in the world, we seem likely soon to become equally notorious for crime and pauperism. The only antidote to these evils is the gospel taught by those who *love it*, as well as preach it.

I. Use of Intoxicants.

A parliamentary return recently issued states the quantity of spirits charged with duty for consumption in the United Kingdom in every year of the present century. It is remarkable that the quantity at the beginning of the century and the quantity in the latest return is almost precisely the same, allowing for increase of population. If we pass over the year 1801, in which the high price of corn led to a prohibition of distillation except from sugar and molasses, we find that in 1802 the quantity of spirits charged with duty for consumption was 15,596,370 gallons, being 0·971 gallons per head, and in 1867 it was 29,538,531 gallons, being 0·979 gallons per head. If we take three periods we get the following results:—In the five years 1802-1806 the quantity consisted of 50,724,904 gallons of home-made spirits, 9,873,641 gallons of foreign spirits, and 12,515,760 gallons of colonial rum; the whole averaging 14,622,861 gallons in a year, or 0·887 gallon per head. In the five years 1832-36 the quantity was 118,074,476 gallons of home-made spirits, 7,082,615 gallons of foreign spirits, and 17,116,892 gallons of colonial rum, averaging 28,454,797 gallons a year, or 1·14 gallon per head. In the five years 1863-67 the quantity was 103,547,505 gallons of home-made spirits, 15,452,734 gallons of foreign spirits, and 19,289,125 gallons of colonial rum, averaging 27,657,873 gallons a year, or 0·929 gallon per head. There was a large reduction of duty on home-made spirits in 1823 and 1826, and the quantity charged sprang up from 9,696,974 gallons in 1823 to 19,684,425 gallons in 1827, and 23,413,770 gallons in 1828. Upon an average of years the consumption of spirits appears to be now somewhat greater than it was at the beginning of the century. In 1861, the latest year in which the number of the population was ascertained, the quantity of home-made, foreign, and colonial spirits charged with duty for consumption amounted to 0·77 gallon per head in England and Ireland, and 1·53 gallon in Scotland.

To foster this evil, there are, taking the whole police district (which includes fifteen miles from Charing Cross, as the Returns do not give the numbers in the

metropolis alone), 6,549 public-houses and gin-palaces, and 4,421 beershops, making a total of 10,970 houses. If placed side by side they would extend for a distance of about thirty-three miles!

II. Crime in London.

According to the "Criminal Returns" just printed of the charges and their results of the Metropolitan Police, we find that the total number of persons, male and female, taken into custody last year in the Metropolitan Districts, for every description of offence, was 63,042. Of these persons, about 46,473 would appear, from the nature of their offences, to belong to the class called roughs, or else to that of professional criminals; the remainder *might* belong to a higher grade, as far as the offences are concerned.

By another "table" we are informed that of the persons summarily convicted by the magistrates, 161 were under ten years of age; 1,980 between the ages of ten and fifteen. Then there are 5,784 between the ages of fifteen and twenty, and 808 hoary sinners above sixty years old, all convicted of various offences. We also learn that 434 juvenile offenders were sent to reformatories, and 265 to industrial schools.

But another table in the "Returns" shows that of the whole number 7,163 could neither read nor write, that 54,134 could read only, or read and write but imperfectly, leaving only 1,745 that could read or write well. And we may say that in round numbers more than 60,000 persons in the Metropolitan District alone, belonging to a socially inferior and uneducated class, such as would generally be characterised as belonging to the London roughs and habitual criminals, were taken into custody during the single year of 1867.

III. Pauperism in London.

The returns of metropolitan pauperism were recently issued. The total number of paupers for the fourth week of June was, in 1868, 127,347; and in 1869, 125,910. In 1867 the figures were 118,982; and in 1866, 98,308. In the western district the total for the fourth week in June was 16,384, a decrease of 42. In the north district 23,837, an increase of 315. In the central district, 18,243, a decrease of 1,041; in the east district, 29,116, a decrease of 2,188; and in the south district, 38,330, an increase of 2,481. Of the total of pauperism in the metropolis, 32,598 are in-door (including children), and 93,312 out-door; and of the latter 49,963 are adults.

The Poor Law Board has awakened to a sense of the unsatisfactory condition of the relief supplied to the homeless poor in the casual wards of the metropolis, and a return has been furnished of the comparative numbers admitted to those wards in the month of January last, and in the same month of the previous year. The return would possess a higher value, if any discrimination of the different classes of casuals was supplied, but even by themselves the figures tell no very encouraging tale. The casual wards of the London workhouses afford shelter for 1,539 men and 974 women. In 1868 the male casuals housed per month amounted to a nightly average of 940, but this year the number has risen to 1,106; the number of female casuals, on the other hand, has slightly decreased. The most remarkable increase is not shown in the districts that are usually pre-eminent in misery. In Bermondsey, Bethnal Green, Shoreditch, Whitechapel, Poplar, and Rotherhithe, pauperism in the casual form exhibits a very trifling increase. But in Clerkenwell, where the average of admissions in 1868 was 27, it was 43 in January last; in Camberwell, it had risen from 29 to 49; in the parishes of St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster, from 29 to 50; in St. Pancras, from 64 to 83; and in Marylebone, from 32 to 39. This remarkable rate of increase, compared with the level maintained in the Eastern and North-Eastern districts, is not readily explicable, unless, indeed, in the more prosper-

ous parishes the casual ward offers more luxuries of entertainment to the discriminating tramp than is the case in the centres of destitution. A few of the wards are seldom more than half full, but some of them, notably those of the Strand Union, the West London Union, and Poplar Union, are regularly crammed.

Correspondence.

A BRIGADE OF FLOWER-GIRLS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—The *Daily Telegraph* of August 10th contains an important suggestion respecting those flower-girls who beset railway stations and other places of popular resort. The scheme seems so valuable that I hope you will reprint it for the consideration of those who care for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the wild tribes of London. It is as follows:—

"Fashions in dress (it remarks) are always changing; but the custom of wearing flowers in the button-hole is one of our English habits which has survived every vicissitude of sartorial fortune. Yet, with all this national demand, the public supply of flowers is strangely inadequate. The sale of violets and moss-roses in the streets is confined to a number of dirty, ragged, slipshod women, who, as a rule, unite begging with their nominal industry—whose look and air suggest the visions of ginshops and back slums, not of green fields, country air, and bright colours,—and in whose hands the very freshest of fresh flowers can hardly fail to look sullied and tainted. It is not the fault of these poor creatures if their wares seem less inviting than they would if intrusted to better keeping; for these women have a hard life, and labour under the stigma of being vagrants and nuisances. It is suggested, therefore, that the system which has been applied so successfully to the shoeblacks of the metropolis should be extended to the peripatetic vendors of flowers—that, in fact, we should have a flower-girl brigade. Each member of the body might be allowed to offer her wares for sale at a certain spot or on a certain defined beat; and a neat plain dress, a stall, a basket, the little stock-in-trade required for the simple calling, might, it is suggested, be easily provided by a small tax upon their earnings. The girls would be at once under the protection and under the supervision of the police; and belonging, as they would, to a recognised association, they would not be liable to the brutality with which the poor forlorn women who hawk nosegays about the streets are now too often treated by the police."

Not only would such an organisation render the calling, what John Bull so loves, "respectable;" but it might tend to place these girls under moral and religious supervision. Few, if any, belong to our Ragged Schools; and, though the bulk are little more than mere children, they are exposed to all the evils incident to street life. Their language is usually coarse, if not indecent; and hence, graduating as flower-girls, they easily slide into the ranks of *the* "Social Evil."

Surely, then, something ought and might be done to save them, body and soul, either on the scheme suggested or by some similar plan. Like our shoeblacks, if early caught, they might become good members of society, and so repay all the labour such oversight would entail.—Yours, &c.,

QUARTUS.

Notices of Meetings.

PERKINS'S RENTS.

THE twelfth annual meeting was held at the schoolroom, under the presidency of the Rev. Canon Conway, in the absence of the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G.

An abstract of the report was read by Mr. J. Burnham, the treasurer. It commenced by stating that "by the good providence of God we have been brought safely through another year." A solemn question was once asked, "What doest thou here?" and it was now addressed to them. When the One Tun public-house, the resort of desperate characters, was converted into the One Tun Ragged School, it was like the dropping of a small seed into the ground, which nothing but the Divine blessing could have caused to take root and to spring up, as it were, into a tree, the branches of which have spread abroad so extensively in this district; fathers and mothers have realised that religion is a thing of deeds, not profession only, and the children of a few years ago are now young men and women, who have been trained up in the way they should go. The Day and Evening Schools for Boys, Girls, and Infants, are open every day, and there are in attendance 200 girls, 105 boys, and 100 infants, and some are occasionally excluded for want of space. After alluding to the opinion of the chaplain of Newgate on the question of trashy and sensational literature, the report said that there were 46 girls and 41 boys in service or in various employments, of whom 28 have gone out to work this year. Nine girls and five boys were to receive the School prize that evening, consisting of a certificate of merit, and money—5s. for one year's good character, 7s. 6d. for two years, and 10s. for three years in the same situation. One boy had been in his situation for ten years. The excursion to Hampstead, the Sunday School, the Children's Clothing Club, the Mothers' Meeting, and the various materials supplied, the Band of Hope, and the Penny Bank, the Working Men's Club (with a subscription of only ½d. per week), were severally alluded to as being in a satisfactory condition, and with favourable prospects.

The finances were very satisfactory, for, although £70 was needed at last Christmas, it had been all supplied.

The meeting was addressed by General Alexander, Rev. J. Wright, Messrs. J. Payne, Tweedie, &c.

WHITECROSS PLACE.

AT the annual meeting of this School the Lord Mayor presided, and made a very earnest appeal for the support of this School and of Ragged Schools generally.

Mr. Taylor, the hon. secretary, then read the annual Report, from which it appeared that 8,000 children had passed through the School. The Infant School had been successful, with an average attendance of 150 during the past year. The largest daily attendance at the Schools had been 293. During the year 14 children had been placed in situations, and 25 boys had entered the Shoe-black Brigade. There had been 301 depositors in their Penny Bank, and the amount deposited was £112—an increase over the previous year. The income of the School had been £177, the expenditure £227, leaving a balance of nearly £50 due to the treasurer.

The meeting was addressed by Sir E. Crisp, Mr. W. Fowler, M.P., Rev. A. McAusland, Lieut. Heaps, Mr. Stapleton, &c.

Papers, Original and Selected.

JUVENILE CRIME IN LONDON.

HABITUAL CRIMINALS ACT.

DURING the past six months England was rocked to its centre by a politico-religious question which almost divided the country into two hostile camps. But, happily, Parliament was not so engrossed by this great party struggle as to forget that there were important social questions which equally required a settlement. One growing evil stared us in the face, and called upon every earnest man to grapple with it, namely, the growth of crime, and more especially the increase of the unhappy class now legally known by the name of "habitual criminals."

The class of habitual criminals has long been known throughout the length and breadth of the land; but our present remarks on the criminal classes will be confined to that great centre of evangelisation, London. How frightful, then, are the following statistics of known London crime, to say nothing of that which is undetected:—According to the "Criminal Returns" just printed, the total number of persons, male and female, taken into custody last year in the metropolitan districts, for every description of offence, was 63,042. Of these persons, about 46,473 would appear, from the nature of their offences, to belong either to the class called roughs, or else to that of professional criminals.

But this terrible list of criminals does not tell the whole tale; since the habitual criminal class—in other words, professional thieves and burglars—forms a prominent feature in every list. Thus, above 500 were known to have been convicted several times; and, in fact, might be registered as incorrigible. Many had escaped conviction through legal flaws, and many more might, doubtless, be added to the list who are unknown to the London police, seeing that they did not enter the ranks of London crime until their career had been stopped in the provinces. It is well known, indeed, that much of London crime is not native, but of provincial origin.

Nor is this the only frightful feature in the list of the criminal classes; for the number of juvenile culprits is a saddening spectacle

Thus by another table just issued, we find that 161 children were summarily convicted who had not reached ten years, 1,980 more were below fifteen, and 5,784 had not attained twenty years. It will be thus seen that nearly 8,000 London criminals were under twenty years of age. Of these juvenile law-breakers 434 were sent to Reformatories and 265 to Industrial Schools. In the whole of England there are no less than 3,700 juveniles in Reformatories.

As might be expected, the large criminal population, floating and habitual, requires a large police-force to keep it in subjection. Hence it is that quite an army is retained to keep down the criminal class, as well juvenile as adult; the former, too, often coming under the designation of "habitual." Thus in the City of London 700 policemen are employed; that is, in other words, one to every 174 of the resident population. In the metropolitan police district, 6,839 are so employed. To this must be added 739 policemen who are employed in the London Docks. This shows a united force of 8,278 men who are solely employed to keep down men and women who fear neither God nor man.

The question has often been asked, Why should this large class of *known* thieves and burglars be allowed to live on the wages of sin, without any steps being taken to prevent the commission of crime? For surely it is wiser to prevent than to punish. Their histories are well known; their very haunts can be penetrated, when the detectives are requested to pilot any literary man to their hiding places; and it is not too much to affirm that the police could capture every London thief or burglar within six hours, were they so disposed. They are active enough in removing the stalls of fish-hawkers and the barrows of costermongers, and thus too often drive these hard-working men and women either into the commission of crime for a living, or into the ranks of pauperism. Many such cases we have witnessed in the poorer districts of London; and we cannot but wish that the same energy were spent on watching the criminal classes as the police display in "putting down" these humble street-traders.

While reiterating the question, Why should not the police be employed to *prevent*, as well as to detect and punish crime? and whether the cost of its repression would not thereby be materially lessened? we are glad to find that something has at last been done by our senators to put a curb on our criminal classes. Thus an Act for the supervision of habitual criminals has just received the Royal Assent. If fully carried out, not only by the police, but

by the magistracy, we think that much will be done to lessen crime, by the wise plan of locking the stable *before* the steed is stolen.

The following is a synopsis of this important Act:—It provides that on a second conviction for any felony, whatever might be the punishment, then, in addition to any punishment awarded by the judge, it should be deemed part of the sentence passed on him, that he shall be subject to the supervision of the police for seven years. Now, if, being subject to that supervision, a man was charged by any police-officer with getting his livelihood by dishonest means, and he failed to make it appear to the magistrate that he was not getting his living in a dishonest way; or, secondly, if he were found by the police in any place, under such circumstances as satisfied the magistrate that he was about to commit a crime punishable on summary conviction, or that he was waiting for an opportunity to aid in the commission of any such crime; or if he were found by any person in or upon any dwelling-house, &c., without being able to account to the satisfaction of the justice for his being found on such premises—he is to be imprisoned for a term not exceeding twelve months, with or without hard labour.

Further provision is made in this Act to render receivers of stolen goods amenable to justice. Hitherto in these cases the burthen of proving guilty knowledge lay upon the prosecutor, and the jury had, in former cases, great difficulty with respect to this proof, because it was one thing to prove a man was in possession of stolen goods, but it was another to show he had a guilty knowledge that the goods were stolen. Now, it is provided by this Act that when any person who has been previously convicted of receiving stolen goods is charged with buying stolen goods, or having them in his possession, the burthen of proof that he did not know they were stolen shall lie on the prisoner. In case of previous conviction it will be enough for the prosecutor to prove the stolen goods were in possession of the prisoner, and it will be then for the prisoner to prove he did not know the goods were stolen. Hitherto former convictions were concealed from the jury until after the trial, to prevent the jury from being influenced by the previous history of the prisoner. But under the new law, in the case of receivers of stolen goods, the course will be to commence with proving the former conviction, and the jury therefore will start with the knowledge in their minds that the prisoner had been previously convicted, and that knowledge will be presumptive proof that the prisoner knew the goods were stolen. It will then

be for the prisoner to show he did not know the goods in his possession were stolen. By this means the jury will be able to obtain evidence in those cases which they could not previously come at. Further than this, the Act refers to dealings in old metals, provisions having been introduced prohibiting the purchase of lead, whether new or old, in any quantity at one time of less weight than 112lb., or of copper, old or new, in any quantity, at one time, of less weight than 56lb. A penalty of £5 can be inflicted for these offences.

Now this Act cannot be regarded as an invasion of the just rights of the criminal classes. Nor does it make a *new* crime, with a fresh penalty. It only does away with the monstrous legal fiction that every habitual thief in a given district is an honest and industrious man, and so waiting until the professional criminal commits a fresh crime before the law sharpens its talons. Every convicted thief or burglar will henceforth be enrolled in the list of professional thieves or burglars; and hence his true social status will be recognised by the police authorities. Thus the Act will serve as a warning to the professional thief; for from this time he will be under the stern eye of the law night and day. It will also in many cases prevent the commission of fresh crimes on the part of those who know that they have lived by open warfare with the rights of property or the rights of person. All, then, that they have to do is to return to habits of industry, when police supervision need no longer be feared; and this they can do, by means of our various "Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies," either in this or, what is preferable, in other lands, where their past career is unknown.

We are glad, then, to find that this Act is not permitted to remain a dead letter, but that it is being applied in all directions. Whether it will stop crime altogether may be doubted; but it will tend, at least, to suppress those thieves' colleges where theft is taught to too many of our juveniles as a science; and it will effectually crush those juvenile thieves' gangs which infest the byeways of London. The character of these juvenile bands may be gathered from the description given of one by the Rev. James Amos, of Kent Street, Southwark. He says that "One of the lads here, only nineteen years of age, has been taken up and sentenced to five years' penal servitude. He was the captain of a band called 'the forty thieves.' He became recently the terror of the neighbourhood, attacking people by running with his head

against them, and in the confusion rifling their pockets, and while escaping, his comrades would stop pursuit by a formidable shower of stones, or other equally effective expedients. His mother, separated from her husband, used to turn the boy adrift, when six years of age, without breakfast, and give him to understand that he had better, by hook or by crook, get something for himself, as she did not intend to be at the cost of keeping him. Two of his brothers are very bad characters, and one of them is also in prison for stealing from a house."

The systematic way in which these juvenile thieves' gangs carry on their nefarious trade is shown by the following case, which was tried at the Middlesex Sessions on September 9th last:—

Four boys, John Foy, Thomas Duffey, John Manning, and Thomas Lanigan, all fifteen years of age, were indicted for stealing a watch, value ten shillings, the property of John Hasleman. The prosecutor, a mere lad, said that on the afternoon of August 25th, at about two o'clock, he was in Glasshouse Street, where there was a crowd assembled; he felt a jerk at his pocket, and on looking he saw his chain hanging down and his watch was gone. He saw the prisoner Duffey near to him. Charles Guiteley said on this afternoon he was in Glasshouse Street, where there was a crowd, and the prosecutor was in it. He saw Foy, Duffey, and Manning close to him. He saw Manning pull the watch out of the prosecutor's pocket, and one of the others was biting away at the bow of it. Foy wrenched it off at the bow, and walked down Glasshouse Street. The prosecutor caught hold of Manning, who said, 'Search me,' and then the prosecutor let him go. He then saw Duffey, Manning, and Lanigan run away into Dock Street. After some other evidence the jury found Duffey, Foy, and Manning guilty, and Lanigan not guilty. He sentenced Manning, Foy, and Duffey to be each imprisoned and kept to hard labour for six weeks, and then to be sent to a Reformatory for four years.

A case like that of "Plummy," the captain of the Kent Street gang, one of many, will serve to show to what terrible temptations the youth of London are exposed, and will at the same time explain the fact that last year 161 children under ten years of age and nearly 2,000 below fifteen were convicted of crime. Something has been done by our Ragged Schools to save hundreds of the poor children who are born and bred in our crime-gardens, or London would not be a place to live in; but thousands more are still exposed to the street-education of such haunts of iniquity as

Kent Street, the Mint, and the Devil's Acre. Can we wonder then that so many have escaped Christian guidance, and thus live by the proceeds of sin?

It is for these poor children of neglect, many of them orphans, that we plead. We do not want even to see them transferred to "Reformatories," valuable as they are in their place; for, seeing that, after all, they are but prisons with another name, the consciousness of having been convicted felons must cleave to them throughout life. We would rather see them freed from the machinations of men grown old in sin, or the allurements of lads who, like "Plummy," glory in their shame, and thus see them trained in our Ragged Schools to serve both God and man. Then virtue will become a *habit* as well as a principle; and, from the guilt-gardens of this and other great cities will arise those who will win for themselves David's photograph of Ahimaaz (2 Sam. xviii. 27), "He is a *good* man."

DUSTY SAM.

BY R. E. CRANFIELD.

THERE is no part of the Sunday School work which has caused me more real enjoyment than the visitation of absentees. I love to see the smiling face and sparkling eye which animate the countenance as the scholar looks up, upon my entrance into his abode, and recognises his spiritual instructor. Often have I been amused to hear him stumbling on the stairs, in his breathless anxiety to convey the important intelligence of my arrival, and chuckling with delight as he uttered the joyful exclamation of "Oh, mother, here's teacher!" Many of our brethren are peculiarly adapted for this department of labour; and as it affords such admirable opportunities for extending the Sunday School benefits to the parents and relatives of the children, the appointment of some one in our various Schools to this special work would doubtless be attended with great advantages.

Our superintendent was a man remarkably qualified for absentee visitation, although, as his presence was required at the School on the Sabbath, he seldom engaged in that work, except on the week-days. His countenance was so bland, his person so commanding, and his manners so kind and unassuming, that he generally met with a respectful reception wherever he went. He was also so fearless, and so well known in the neighbourhood of the School which had long been notorious as the residence of the most desperate characters—the lowest of the low—that he hesitated not to go into any hole or corner in search of precious souls.

One Sunday afternoon, the School being well supplied with teachers, and there being many children absent, he, contrary to his usual practice, determined upon going out to make what he called a "reconnoitre," and asked

me to accompany him. It was a fine autumn Sunday. The sun was shining forth in all his strength, and not a cloud was seen in the heavens for a moment to intercept his glorious rays. As we proceeded, my friend seemed unusually buoyant and happy, and spoke enthusiastically of Him who is "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." We had not walked far, when we saw a number of children playing at "king of the castle," on a heap of rubbish. Without saying a word, my friend withdrew his arm from mine and went in among them. "Children," said he, "I can tell you of a better hill, which many little ones have learned to climb, so much more clean and pleasant than this, that they would not leave it for the one on which you are playing for the world." "Where? where?" cried several voices at once. He then spoke to them so beautifully and simply about the hill of Zion, that they were contented to suspend their gambols, and listen awhile to his interesting address. All this was done so cleverly and in such a kind manner, that he completely won their confidence, and had no difficulty in getting them to promise that they would ask their parents for permission to attend the School. One of these children subsequently became a teacher, and received an appointment as missionary to a neglected district in England.

After visiting two or three of the parents, we turned into what was called a square, where we saw a number of persons outside their houses, some sitting, some standing, and some lying their full length on the ground. The men, for the most part, were smoking; the women, with folded arms, were many of them lounging against the walls, engaged in noisy conversation with each other; whilst a number of children were playing around in all directions. As I frequently had passed this place on my way to the School, I was not much surprised at the painful sight; but my friend stood still to survey the scene. "What's the matter, old boy?" asked a man with a dirty pipe in his mouth, just putting his head out of the window. "Who are you looking for?" "I am looking for what I cannot find," said my friend. "What's that?" he again inquired. "A person with clean face and Sunday dress, who looks as if he had been to church this morning." "Then," said the man, "I think you will look long enough before you find that rum animal," and, with a horse-laugh, he withdrew into his room.

My companion now observing a group of persons in one corner of the square, engaged in conversation, went up to them, and, taking a Bible from his pocket, asked if they would like to hear him read something from that volume. "Oh," said a man, who seemed to be the chief speaker, "I know all about that 'ere book. I have read it through from Genesis to *Exeter*." "Don't believe him, sir," said another; "he can't read any more than I can." Without staying to inquire into the truth of this statement, my friend at once began to read to them the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. This unusual proceeding brought together a large number of people; and he, finding them attentive, went on to explain and to exhort, and, as he had a strong voice, many were attracted to their windows to listen to his remarks

Among the heads which were thus thrust out of the dingy windows, was that of a man who commonly went by the name of "Dusty Sam," his employment being that of a dustman. I had often seen this person about the

neighbourhood, and his remarkable appearance had attracted my attention, he being little of stature—not much more than five feet in height—with thick limbs, broad shoulders, and an unusually large head. Sam was of a quiet, harmless disposition, but was occasionally subject to fits of melancholy, which, at times, ended in temporary derangement, when it was found necessary to place him under restraint.

On the following evening, our superintendent being present at the School, the dustman's wife came in to request that he would visit her husband, who wished very much to see him. It appeared that, after the service, poor Sam became very thoughtful and dejected. The words of the parable, "in hell he lifted up his eyes," had powerfully affected him, and he sat silently pondering them in his heart. His wife became alarmed, thinking that a melancholy fit had seized him, and tried, without effect, to draw him into conversation. Towards night he became much excited, and paced the room with an agitated step, darting strange looks at his wife, and muttering incoherent sentences about being sinners, and lifting up their eyes in hell. She now tried to soothe his troubled spirit, by saying, "You are not well, man; sit down and smoke your pipe, as you do on other nights." But Sam could not sit, he could not stand, neither could he remain still, in any position. "I cannot bear this," thought Sam; "but there is one thing I can do—I can go out and search for the man whom I heard this afternoon, and, perhaps, he will tell me something more about Him who is able and willing to save." Accordingly, he seized his hat, thrust it on his head, and made towards the door; but his vigilant wife was on the alert, and believing that her husband was now deranged, she threw her arms around him, and holding him fast, called loudly for assistance. A violent struggle took place at the door, and Sam succeeded in getting as far as the stairs; but some of the lodgers making their appearance, he was forced back into his room; and as no doubt was entertained by any one of his temporary insanity, he was bound hand and foot, and effectually prevented from doing mischief, either to himself or others.

Against this violent proceeding Sam most loudly and energetically protested, declaring that nothing was the matter with him, and that he only wanted to go and see the gentleman who told him about the man that lifted up his eyes in hell; but his words appeared to them as idle tales, and they believed him not. What was to be done? It was useless for him to contend any longer with his friends; he resolved, therefore, to try to come to a compromise. He told his wife that he would be willing to remain quite still, if she would only go the following day to the Sunday School, and ask the teacher to visit him; and as he urged his request with much importunity, she, after considerable hesitation, acceded to his desires.

Though our superintendent had been prepared by the wife for something extraordinary, he was not a little surprised, on his entrance, to see poor Sam lying on his back, with his legs and arms extended, and fastened to the bedstead with strong cords; but still more was he astonished to hear him say, with great earnestness, "Oh, sir, I want you to tell me if such a sinner as I am can be saved? You said yesterday something about God being able to save to the uttermost. I am very ignorant, and wish to have it made plain to me." After a little conversation, the visitor found out how matters really stood,

and requested that the man might be unloosed. "He is mad," whispered the wife. "Would to God," answered our friend, "that hundreds more of your neighbours were as mad as your husband. No, my dear woman, you make a great mistake; his disorder is not of the head, but of the heart." After much persuasion, the wife was induced to release her husband from his uncomfortable position; and his spiritual counsellor, with great plainness of speech, showed him how we were tied and bound by the chain of our sins, and pointed him to the Friend of sinners, who unlooses our bonds, and sets the prisoner free. The poor man listened to these statements with intense interest. Light was breaking in upon his mind, joy was depicted in his countenance, and that night, for the first time in his life, his knees were bent in humble supplication before the footstool of mercy; and the teacher returned to his home, with his soul magnifying the Lord, and his spirit rejoicing in God his Saviour.

The subsequent history of this man proved that the change which appeared in him was genuine. He became sober, steady, and industrious in his habits, and a regular attendant at the house of God. His master, finding him a person to be depended upon, made him a kind of foreman over the dustyard, where he acquitted himself to the satisfaction of his employer. His temperance and industry gave fresh vigour to his constitution, so that his fits became less frequent, and in the end, entirely ceased. Rich indeed were the fruits, moral, physical, and spiritual, which were reaped from the seed cast into this unpromising soil. The sight was glorious. It gladdened our hearts, encouraged us in our work, and afforded us a fresh illustration of the delightful truth, that "Godliness is profitable unto all things."

CLARE MARKET RAGGED SCHOOL.

If I were asked, says a writer in the *Christian Times*, which is the wildest, the most wretched portion of west London, I should say Drury Lane. The street itself, and every court which leads out of it, overflows with filth, and sin, and crime. But it must not be forgotten that honest poor are often found mingled with the felon and the thief. The charity that "suffereth long and is kind" goes into this den of immorality, and, fixing upon a spot in the very heart of it, settles down there, and begins her good work in Clare Market.

There are Day Schools for boys and girls; there is an Infant School; an Evening School for elder girls; a boys' Night School; and there is a Sunday School. And, more than this, there is a Mothers' Meeting, always well attended, which is superintended by a lady. There is a Penny Bank, Penny Readings; and for twopence you may become a member of the Clare Market Institute, which entitles you to books and newspapers, &c., &c., and a comfortable room. There is also a Lending Library; and we may hope that the book taken home by the little girl or boy may help towards the reformation of a depraved father or mother.

On Friday morning I find myself in the chief room of the School, which was discovered, after a long search, amidst the purlieus of Clare Market.

The time approaches the hour of one p.m., and I see seated round the room upwards of a score of children—rags and pale faces, with that peculiar set of the hair which indicates poverty; sallow cheeks and sunken eyes—but there are here also brave people who go into the hardest and hottest strife, who are careless of the praise of the world, whose highest joy is doing good. These people are beside me. A benevolent old man, a Q.C. and M.P., whose name for philanthropy is known throughout the world, walks round the tables, and speaks kindly words to the poverty-stricken guests. A kind lady, whose goodness sometimes, nay, frequently, assumes the form of substantial viands, is going about the room; and her presence falls like sunshine upon the ragged ones.

But the baker has come with a huge joint of meat; and the superintendent, who has the rare quality of seeming to be everywhere at all times, is slicing away at it; kind-hearted ladies are acting as waiters; and sunken eyes begin to flash, and pallid cheeks begin to glow. Every little one, from three years old and upwards, is helped; then all rise, and, to the plaintive music of "Martyrdom," ask God to bless the food of which they are about to partake. On the faces of the poor boys is a look that speaks of struggling with the world.

Half-past eight is the appointed hour for supper. The clock over the fireplace points to the half-hour. The guests concentrate their looks on the door. It soon opens; and in enters a baker with a portly tray on his head. The expectant boys breathe with a feeling of relief. An elderly man, whose breakfast and dinner has been a cup of coffee, is treated to an ample plate of roast meat with pudding and potatoes.

The friend who accompanied me said, when we reached Lincoln's Inn Fields,—there were tears on his cheeks,—"That school seems to me like a new heart put into a diseased body. I hope it may, by its healthy pulsations, spread wholesome life everywhere."

A DAY WITH THE NEWCASTLE SHOE-BLACKS.

"CLEAN your boots, sir?" cried a chubby urchin, as we emerged from the Central Station at Newcastle, and the crooked finger was alternately raised in respect to the blue muffin on his head and pointed at our once immaculate Wellingtons. "By no means," was the reply; "do you not see that they have been cleaned?" "Well, sir, if you call *them* cleaned, why, then, they are cleaned; but you might let me give 'em a shine, sir." Pondering awhile on his important suggestion, we argued aloud that our boots had been duly cleaned by an active young person who presides over that particular department of our establishment in the country, and on the other hand, that as Mr. Smudge, the cattle-dealer, had thought fit to smear our domestic polish with his studded hoofs as he rolled and squeezed himself into the railway-carriage, there could be no actual impropriety in having removed the traces of the accident, as he was pleased to call it; so "on second thoughts, young Day and Martin, you may give them a shine if you can." "If I *can*, sir; you'll see in about half a crack. Of course, servant girls

does their best, but what can they do, sir, against the regular trade? We are at it all day from week-end to week-end." Down went his mat and stand, and with scorn, he glanced up, and in a tone of remonstrance said, "Now, sir, you don't mean to call that a shine, I hope?" "Hold your tongue, young Day and Martin, and look alive." Whereupon he grappled with the boot as though it were a fowl he had to slay for dinner. When the glow of the boot gave back the reflection of his honest satisfaction, we made mental portraits of him and of his calling, taking a kind of bird's-eye view of his bowed back, quivering cords, bulging guernsey, and upturned hob-nailed shoes. He was fat, and yet he was lithe and sprightly. Well fed, then, and well clothed: but evidently under some home discipline, which gave steadiness to the activity which might have sprung from mere want.

When he arose from his task and awaited his fee for his lowly but acceptable service, we parleyed with him. "You belong to a brigade, then, young shoe-black?" "Yes, sir; there's a score or more of us, all in uniform, and we live all together in a Home, and Sergeant Markham is our governor, a kind of brigadier-general, and—would you like to see the Home, sir?" "Exactly so, even therefore came we forth this morning; we wish to let the public know a little more about you and your society than either we or it know at present. Lead on."

As we proceeded, several bigger and less wholesome-looking lads came into view, who had no uniform, but only rags and the usual shoe-blacking apparatus. We felt strongly drawn out towards these unwashed, unkempt, uncared-for outsiders. "Them's black-coats, sir," said young Day and Martin, in a slightly disparaging tone, "most of them's been in the Home and learnt their trade, and then because they were wild, or had to be turned out, or had drunken fathers and mothers who wanted to grab their earnings, they left us and set up for themselves. People that knows no better kind of pities them and thinks they ought to be encouraged; but bless you, sir, that's all gammon, they shoves us about and knocks us down, and spill our blacking, and steal our brushes sometimes, and they've no business on our stands or anywhere else for that matter; they obstructs the footpath, and everybody knows that's agin the law, only the Mayor and the Watch Committee has given us leave to obstruct the pavement, for the public good, and on condition that we are properly looked after and kept from going on bad, as we used to do, and should do now but for the Home. Sometimes there is a rush of boots, but not lately, and when there is a rush, of course we don't grudge them a share; but when we see them earning three or four shillings a day and spending it all just as they like, or gambling with it like lords, it makes us wish to turn black-coats too, and have the run of the streets like we used to have, and if people only knew the harm they did both to the lads and themselves and to us that are trying to grow up honest and industrious, they wouldn't set foot on one of their stands again. Cos you see, sir, it isn't as if they must starve; they might all come to the Home, and welcome, and then they'd share the privilege instead of poaching, like. But it is not likely as the Mayor will give all the lads in Newcastle the right to molest everybody that goes along the streets, and to shove and scramble and swear and fight and crowd folks into the gutter; so you see, sir, our committee have got the right, because the magistrates thought it a good thing to take

us rough idle lads from our own dens, and from having our own way, and teach us to earn a living and learn a bit, and be brought under a bit, for fear of worse. Most of us have been in a poor way, and were going barefoot and quick to the bad till we were admitted to the Brigade, and —this way, sir." "Up those stairs?" "Oh, no sir; anywhere but there. That's the Manors Police Court, and some of us have been there, but now we give it the slip, every way, and go round the corner. We have a fine view of the court from our front windows, that is, I should say, of the *outside*, and I reckon that's the best side view of a police-station for the likes of us."

In this yard we encounter the ghosts of departed age. Here are the backs of the Almshouses, and the Sunday School of All Saints' Church, and a part of an old Augustinian monastery, which is now let by the Corporation at a nominal rental as a Refuge for Destitute Boys—the home of our young friend and the rest of the Shoe-black Brigade. It is a dismal hole and corner; but it has its romantic and legendary interest as well as a present eminently practical attraction for every philanthropic mind. Now utility and severity divide the region of darkness; coal and coke lumber up the foot of the spiral staircase, while the inner hold is a refractory ward for boys who are too old or too hardened for correction with the strap. As we enter the habitable tower, on the left is a sort of office; it was formerly the school-room, but that was when the average number of inmates was about a dozen; now that there is sometimes double that number, the Committee have been thankful to avail themselves of the adjoining school-room belonging to All Saints'. The little room is, however, still used as a place of instruction on the Sunday, when the Inspector, Sergeant Markham, assisted by Mr. Anderson, one of the Committee, holds classes for religious instruction. Either in this little room or the dining-room, one or other of the Town Missionaries holds a service on Sunday evening—the boys attending ordinary public worship only in the morning. This service, so cheerfully rendered by the Town Mission, will explain the rather unusual item in the balance-sheet of the Brigade of an annual subscription to the Town Mission of £3 3*s*. Of course it is only an acknowledgment, and as the main income of the society is from the earnings of the boys, there is not only no impropriety but a great deal that is pleasant in this complimentary gift.

But it is getting near dinner time, and we will go up-stairs. Looking out of window, we descry the Brigade marching in single file, bag and baggage, in heavy marching order, one of them sporting a chair—probably he has a few lady customers. They are soon free from burdens, and away they rush to the lavatory, behind the dining-room. It is a rude shed, and is only very imperfectly sheltered from the winter winds, but here they not only perform their daily ablutions, but also take their weekly tepid bath, and it must be a very hot bath that becomes only tepid in such an ungenial and unsheltered spot. However, better days are surely coming, and then we shall not have to murmur even at the dining-room. It is too small, too rough, too much like the tenements in which many of these lads have been reared to recklessness of life. Happy will it be for them when the liberality of the public provides a Home worthy of the name as a Refuge for the

Destitute. As we stood and watched, we felt that the food was out of keeping with such wretched accommodation. They dined to day *en prince* on soup, *bouilli*, and rice pudding. One proud stomach there was, and as a consequence one sulky temper. Shall we call him Job, for his discontent, and pillory him here? Well, Job didn't like his meat, and took a fit of the sullens. A suspicious case, suggesting irregular morsels presented by kind-hearted cabbies on the stand or surreptitious buns. Was he punished? Well, slightly. He would have liked some pudding, but the fiat of the Inspector had gone forth: No.

We forgot to say that the first thing done on the return of the boys was the depositing of their earnings of the morning with the Inspector, who entered the several amounts opposite the names of the boys. The highest amount was 2s. 3d., the lowest 5d., the total was about 18s., and this was considered below the average of a Saturday, which is ordinarily their best day. Our little friend Day and Martin told us that he had earned 24s. in a fortnight, of which 4s. would be his own; one shilling he could put by if he liked in the savings-box down stairs, but the other would be duly taken care of by Mr. Corbett, the earnest treasurer of the society, until the boy left the Home. Some have had £4 or £5 to draw on leaving, and this has served to procure the lad outfit for sea or a decent start in some other line of life. The average earnings for the boys last year was 8s. 9d. a week; some reached occasionally 15s. or 16s. This is not wholly from shining boots. Boys run errands; boys find sixpences; boys find gold lockets and get small rewards; and all that they get must be accounted for to the Inspector. Sometimes this odd and irregularly-earned money furnishes a temptation to the lads which does not appear to attach in any but a very common degree to their regular earnings. It is but human nature to have a blow-out of cocoa-nuts and sausages on the strength of a lucky find; but Mr. Markham very properly sets himself against this particular phase of human nature.

When dinner is despatched, the next duty is to clean their boots. This is done twice a day, and in summer thrice a day. A boot cleaner should have clean boots. These boys hang their shop-sign on their boots, and, "polish for polish," they help one another to turn out twice a day perfect models to general society in the one particular of "polish." Then, single file, quick march and away, at one o'clock, to resume their work in the streets till five, when they will return to tea, play, and school.

We take a turn through the Dormitories. They are clean, but they do not look comfortable. So incommoded have the inmates been that the Corporation has kindly plastered the slates of the attic out of sight, and it is proposed to make it one more uncomfortable bedroom.

The connection with a training ship is already a fact, and an important one in the working of this Home. Sergeant Markham is allowed a small salary by the committee of the *Wellesley* for investigating cases of applications, and as many boys pass from the Refuge to service at sea, the connection between the Home and the ship would be but natural, and sure to prove advantageous to both.

AT A RAGGED SCHOOL EXCURSION.

It matters not who they were, whence they came, or whither they went. In numbers they touched a thousand, exclusive of teachers and friends; so that there was wide scope for observation and selection. It was a large school-room which contained them, and yet many from extreme youth and pressure of business were unavoidably absent. Now they begin to stream out, preceded by the great school banner, and a brass band, in uniform, playing very respectably, and making the streets resonant with music, which once had known these instrumentalists only as ragged Arabs, and noisy nuisances, if not worse. The girls follow in sections of fifty, distinguished by colours, and with banners flying, led by female teachers, and guarded by male. Then the boys succeed, assorted into ages, the eldest being in the rear.

The day is fine, and some of "the light which lighteth every man (woman and child) that cometh into the world," shines forth from the eyes of the majority of all present. Look at the first section of girls of from six to eight years of age, and say, Was it possible that Adam and Eve, as they looked upon each other in Paradise, could have awakened smiles more innocent of guile than those of many we mark here? Some of these out of guilt gardens, where some of our readers would fear to tread, and yet, though bred in sin, and unredeemed, with the bloom of heaven not yet brushed from their cheeks, and the dimples of innocence imprinted at birth by their kind Father's fingers not yet effaced by the mailed hand of sin. And yet, what is their destiny? Who on earth can tell? Heaven, if their teacher could will it. Heaven, if fervent prayers, daily pleaded morn and night, and oftener, at times, could effect it. Heaven, if their Saviour has not called them to his arms in vain, and has not suffered needlessly. Heaven, if God's "will be done in earth." Large is the faith of their teacher, earnest is her pleading, and yet with great fear and trembling she marks their absence from School, or visits their homes. She yearns, nay, agonises for their souls; her eyes stream by day, and her pillow is bedewed by night, when she thinks how small the chance of eternal life is to this or that loving child, who now looks upon her instructor as nothing less than an angel of light.

The stream passes on. Here are girls of from eight to ten years of age. Happiness is in their eyes, joy in every movement; their step is firm, elastic. There are many sweet faces among them, but much of the bloom of Paradise is brushed off their cheeks, and most of the dimples are effaced or but faintly existing. Their teachers are pardonably proud of their generally intelligent eyes, their clean appearance, and their tidy apparel; the result of many lessons, in the Bible, Sewing Classes, prolonged meetings, and great ingenuity in converting old dresses into the resemblance of new.

The old teacher reviewing the past, and forecasting the future, cannot look along this stream of nearly six hundred girls without pondering their destiny. There is Emily Page, fairly endowed with intellect, fond of singing hymns, regular in attendance at School, sweet-tempered and loving; but she has just gone out to work, though only ten years of age, and fears creep in

respecting her; for her elder sister, who is present, was almost her counterpart at her age, and now she rarely attends School except on wet Sundays, and then seems to care no more for spiritual instruction than the brass bracelet she wears on her wrist. While Johanna Smith, perhaps more promising at first, was last seen in the Haymarket and could not be prevailed upon even by tears to alter her way of life. Jane Watson is unloving and unloved, and has a temper which no teacher has yet tamed. She is proof against harshness, kindness reaches not her heart, while the gospel pleadings and teachings, and her Saviour's undying love, seem to affect her no more than an old song without music and without meaning. Mary Ashman was like her. She married a poor but hard-working man, who, without gospel knowledge, and tired of his life, went red-handed to his Maker, and left her uncured of her vice, though it loses her many a day's work at charing, and deprives her four orphans ofttimes of a meal. Her children attend the School, and the two elder are in the procession, but she cannot leave them without giving their teacher a little parting advice, in not the mildest of terms, while her eldest daughter, unless she has greatly altered since last year, will grumble at everything provided, though all that can be is cheerfully done to make her happy.

As with the girls, so with the boys. As they begin to earn money they take to themselves wings, which carry them far afield from Christian influence, and at a "treat" like this they are seen for the last time for good—the "penny gaff," the "sing-song," the "hop," the pipe and the "pint," beginning now to take full possession of hearts which seemingly had opened to Christian influences and were full of promise.

As we accompany the procession to the railway, we notice many incidents worthy of record. Here are mothers proud of their children, their children being ashamed of them, as the former are often drunken and slatternly, while the latter are perhaps members of the Band of Hope. Children, too, are numerous, who envy their happy friends, they being either unable or unwilling to fulfil the light conditions on which the "treat" is given. But the excursionists are generous to a fault: they give away fruit, and cakes, and biscuits, and broken food of various kinds, which they have either purchased or had given to them to sustain their strength until the dinner-hour arrives. Street vendors also are numerous, and idle men with pipes in their mouths, perchance thinking of times when they, too, were Ragged School children and nearer heaven than at present. Mishaps there are; few of moment. Here an "infant" whose sandal has come undone, and having shed her shoe, fears being left behind, or sent home from this her first "treat." But her tears are soon dried. A male teacher picks her up in his arms and carries her until her own teacher has with a piece of string extemporised another sandal to the almost soleless shoe. There a man with a heart of flint attempts to drive some bullocks through the throng, or whips his horse as the children are crossing. To the credit of the public, there is generally help from the outside under such circumstances.

At length the station is reached, the journey soon accomplished, and the children grouped over some large field kindly lent by the proprietor for the occasion. The incidents are noteworthy; greediness and generosity uncloaked are seen, pride and humility contrasted, gratitude and thank-

lessness exhibited. Here a girl has lost all her money, and she is overwhelmed with gooseberries, plums, apples, pears, cakes, brandy-balls, and other *olla podrida*. There a boy appropriates the possessions of his neighbour. Then you come across a child with perhaps a bright threepenny-piece in her possession which she is not allowed to spend, as her father is out of work, or her mother without money or food. Cripples sometimes are found. This one has lost her foot, and her sister denies herself swings and rides that she may be near her who can only look on and bemoan her hard fate. Another has fainted before dinner for want of food, her drunken mother having left nothing in the cupboard for the poor child's breakfast. She will want no more that day, though the freewill offerings for a hungry child cannot but make one smile and think abstinence preferable to sherbet, hard-bake, nuts, cocoanut, unripe plums, green apples, &c.

The better of these incidents repay a teacher for the toil and trouble attending a Ragged School "treat," the others enforce the solemn question —a question which has been for some time asked without an acceptable answer — "Are there no other means than these for retaining the elder scholars, and is sin necessarily the natural result of the development of the Sunday School child into the adult?" If so, the Sunday School has failed in its mission. That it has not altogether failed is daily proved by the conversion and happy death of many children; but that the youth of both sexes should so often fall away from their first love and break the real 'apostolical succession," is enough to make the soul of the most strong-hearted Christian ill at ease with itself, and its duties to God, to Christianity, and to man. The subject is well worthy of mature consideration and earnest prayer, seeing that the promise is so great at the beginning, and the garnering of the full ear is often so small.

J. C. F.

RATING OF SUNDAY AND RAGGED SCHOOLS.

THOUGH there are about 100 lawyers in Parliament, it seems to be impossible to frame any Act in which legal acumen cannot detect some flaw. The Ragged School Exemption from Rating Act is no exception to this rule. Thus doubts have arisen whether it is imperative or only permissive. Mr. Hadfield, M.P., has taken counsel's opinion. The following was the case as stated, and the opinion thereupon:—

CASE.

Please to refer to an Act passed the 26th July, 1869, viz., 32 and 33 Victoria, cap. 40, and intituled "An Act to Exempt from Rating Sunday and Ragged Schools."

The preamble states, "until lately, buildings used as Sunday and Ragged Schools for gratuitous education enjoyed an exemption from poor and other rates, and it is expedient that they should be exempted from such liability."

It was argued that such buildings gave no beneficial or profitable enjoy-

ment, and were not within the meaning of the statute of Elizabeth, but a late decision of the House of Lords (Jones v. Mersey Docks, 35 L. J., Mag. Ca. 1) held them rateable.

Carefully peruse this Act, and advise whether the Act gives exemption absolutely, or whether it empowers every authority, at their discretion only, to exempt these useful institutions from any rate:—whether the Act gives exemption, or only power to exempt?

And advise generally.

OPINION.

I think that the meaning of the Act 32 and 33 Vic., c. 40, is open to much doubt.

Though the word "may" is generally only permissive, yet the rule of construction is, that it is imperative, when it gives a power, which is to be exercised for the public benefit, and there is nothing but the word itself to show that the Legislature intended to make the exercise of the power discretionary. See the Queen *v.* Tithe Commissioners, 14 Q.B. 474; M'Dougall *v.* Paterson, 11 C.B. 755; R. *v.* Barlow Salk, 609; S.C. Skinner 270.

In the Act in question, I think that the context does not show that the Legislature intended the power to be discretionary. The title of the Act and the preamble both lead to the inference, that the Legislature intended the exemption to be absolute, and there is nothing in the preamble to show that it was expedient that some Sunday Schools should be exempted and not others. The words "it is expedient that they should be exempted" clearly means that ALL should be exempt, and the title implies, that the Act itself effects the exemption.

If the "authority" is to exercise a discretion the Act does not give the slightest hint as to the principles by which the discretion is to be guided. Is the poverty of the district to be considered? and, if yea, which way is it to operate? The poor rate in such a district cannot afford to lose a contributory; but, on the other hand, such a district is peculiarly one in which every burden should be taken off which is an obstacle to the education of the poor. Which way is the "authority" to lean between such conflicting considerations? and what is to guide him generally as to the exercise of his discretion?

The proviso is certainly useless if the word "may" is imperative; but it is equally useless if the word is permissive; for, if the word is considered to be permissive, it does not in any way subject to rates those buildings which, by the Act of 3 and 4 Will. 4, c. 30, are exempt.—If the proviso is, as I think it is, equally inoperative whether the word "may" is permissive or imperative, I think the most reasonable view to take of the proviso is, that it was inserted merely *ex abundanti cautelâ* to prevent the possibility of questions, and that it falls under the maxim, *Expressio eorum, quæ tacite insunt, nihil operatur.*

There being therefore in my opinion nothing in the context to show that the word is intended to give a discretion, the question arises, whether the power is one which is to be exercised for the public benefit within the meaning of the rule which makes it imperative on the parties to whom it is given to exercise it, and in my opinion it is. I think that the Act was passed *pro bono publico*, and that the recital as to the expediency of the exemption

means that the interest of the public requires that such buildings shall be exempt from rates. After such a recital it seems to me most inconsistent to suppose that the Legislature should have left it to all sorts of local authorities to say in each particular case, whether a Sunday or Ragged School shall or shall not be exempt, and this without laying down any rule to guide them.

Considering the well-known ambiguity of the word "may" in statutes, I think there is great room for doubt as to the meaning of this Act, and that it requires the judgment of a court of law before its meaning can be considered to be ascertained. But my opinion is, that the proper construction of the Act is that the exemption is absolute, and that there is no discretion.

7th August, 1869, *Temple*. H. H. Dodgson.

Poet's Corner.

HARVEST-HOME.

From the far-off fields of earthly toil
A goodly host they come,
And sounds of music are on the air,—
'Tis the song of the Harvest-home.
The weariness and the weeping—
The darkness has all pass'd by,
And a glorious sun has risen—
The Sun of Eternity!

We've seen those faces in days of yore,
When the dust was on their brow,
And the scalding tear upon their cheek;
Let us look at the labourers now
We think of the life-long sorrow,
And the wilderness days of care;
We try to trace the tear-drops,
But no scars of grief are there.

There's a mystery of soul-chasten'd joy
Lit up with sun-light hues,
Like morning flowers most beautiful,
When wet with midnight dews.
There are depths of earnest meaning
In each true and trustful gaze,
Telling of wondrous lessons
Learnt in their pilgrim days.

They've seen the safely garner'd sheaves,
And the song has been passing sweet,
Which welcomed the last in-coming one
Laid down at their Saviour's feet.
Oh! well does His heart remember,
As those notes of praise sweep by,
The yearning, plaintive music
Of earth's sadder minstrelsy.

And well does *He* know each chequer'd tale,
As he looks on the joyous band—
All the lights and shadows that cross'd their path,
In the distant pilgrim land;—
The heart's unspoken anguish—
The bitter sighs and tears—
The long, long hours of watching—
The changeful hopes and fears!

One had climb'd the rugged mountain-side;
'Twas a bleak and wintry day;
The tempest had scatter'd his precious seed,
And he wept as he turn'd away.
But a stranger-hand had water'd
That seed on a distant shore,
And the labourers now are meeting,
Who never had met before.

Some with eager step went boldly forth,
Broad casting o'er the land;
Some water'd the scarcely budding blade,
With a tender, gentle hand.
There's *one*—her young life was blighted,
By the withering touch of woe;
Her days were sad and weary,
And she never went forth to sow;
But there rose from her lonely couch of pain,
The fervent pleading prayer;
She looks on many a radiant brow,
And she reads the answers there!

Yes! sowers and reapers are meeting;
A rejoicing host they come!
Will you join the echoing chorus?—
'Tis the song of the Harvest-home!

Teachers' Column.

THE SLEEPY TEACHER.

He is not sleepy physically, nor, perhaps, mentally, on other than religious subjects. Perhaps it is only the Ragged School lesson that puts him to sleep. At any rate he brings only dulness, and vapidness, and indifference to his class, and soon they are a sleepy class, showing in the very tones of their voice that they have caught the teacher's disease.

What is the matter? It is not far to seek; these points will reveal the secret.

1. Such a teacher has no living sympathy with Christ, else he would not treat Christ's work with indifference. A better religious experience is the remedy.

2. Such a teacher has no living sympathy with children. If he frequently met his class at his house for an evening, he might do himself as much good as his class.

3. Such a teacher is not accustomed to apply the lesson closely to his own heart and conscience. If he did he could not treat it with sleepiness.

Are we wrong in the fancy that we have occasionally caught sight of this most monstrous of monstrosities, drowsy teachers, in Ragged Schools? Now the devil never sleeps! The world, his great ally, is always awake, pouring its fascination on the young. Can we, then, be content to be drowsy, like another Jonah, whilst the storm is raging all around?

Rather let us take counsel of Jesus, and hear him repeat the question he put to Peter, "What! couldst thou not watch *with* me [and *for* me] one hour?"

TEACHERS IN EARNEST.

It is easy to know an earnest man when we see him as a teacher. His features are well developed; he has his characteristics—you may view them in his *study*. Do not be startled at the word; he has his study. The place, the time, the method, the object, are all matters of great moment with him. You will not find him on Sunday morning undecided as to the subject for the day; that is fixed long before, arranged, pondered, thought over; the plan of his campaign is well marked out, nor will he offer unto God that which costs him nothing.

The *closet* bears witness to the earnestness of the teacher. See, you cannot be mistaken. How he paces the room; he is wrapped in thought. What a grave countenance, what a weight of responsibility, what a sense of insufficiency! His lips move, he is in God's presence; he thinks he is alone with him; he bends his knee. Hark! can you hear his voice? what is it? the voice of prayer? Oh, how earnest! He puts one in mind of Jacob; how he wrestles; being in an agony, he prays more earnestly. What think you, will he prevail? He pleads the name of Jesus; and God, his God, doth bless him. Now is his face lit up with joy, and he begins to sing, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." This is the earnest teacher. We cannot be mistaken about him, for "he travails in birth for souls."

Behold the earnest teacher in *school*. He is there in time. He will not be behind; he makes it a point of conscience; he thinks of his example. Besides, he loves his work, and goes with cheerful feet, because his heart is there. You shall not find him slothful; the clock has not struck, yet he is in his place; the greeting look has gone around, his fellow-teachers feel the shine. He is not too late to sing, not he; his soul is all on fire; look at him while he sings, then hear his voice in prayer. Ah, he would not miss that service; it nerves him for the day. But now the School is opened, yet he has regard to order. See him conduct his class: he makes me think of

Jesus; he goeth before them and leadeth them out, he knoweth them and they follow him. Now look at him in his class. His face, his glance, his manner, his voice, his method, indicate earnestness. See, he has a single eye, a glorious object, a dauntless spirit. The whole atmosphere of the School is permeated; his fellow-teachers feel the glow; his class feel it, and they show it; they carry it to their very homes. The tear of penitence drops, the eye of faith is opened, the soul immortal is renewed; for God will bless that teacher's labours, and give him a rich harvest.

O my brother! are *you* in earnest? Heed not who is not in earnest in the most difficult of all tasks, that of *soul-saving*. See to it that thou at least dost catch some of the spirit of Him who could say at the close of His life-work, "I have *finished* the work Thou gavest me to do!" So shalt thou lay many a precious sheaf at the feet of Jesus at the great Harvest-home.

Children's Gallery.

STORY OF A SEWING MACHINE.

It is always pleasing to see the rich caring for the poor; they thus recognise the saying of a great king, "The Lord is the maker of them all" (Prov. xxii. 2).

Our beloved Queen has set a bright example in this respect. Many times has she visited the cottagers near Balmoral Castle, and read the best of books to the sick or the sorrowful. Nor is this all. One Sunday afternoon we saw a troop of girls joyously entering the National School outside Osborne. What were they about? They were going to the Queen's Bible Class. Were they rich or noble? No; they were all the children of her farm-labourers. Do you wonder that we prayed in our hearts, "God save the Queen"?

We are glad to find that the Princess Alexandra is following the example of her royal mother. In our number for September (p. 199) you will see how kindly she visited and spoke to the Egyptian girls when she visited the Mission or Ragged School in Cairo. The following true story will show how ready she is to listen to the sorrows and to help the industrious poor.

Crossing the hall of Marlborough House late one afternoon, a few days before last Christmas, the Princess Alexandra observed a girl of delicate appearance waiting, and also standing, though tired and faint. The Princess kindly told her to sit down, asked her errand, and found that she had brought some little garments which had been ordered for her children, and which the Princess, who is much interested in sewing machines, had desired should be made for her. Pleased with the modest appearance and gentle manners of the girl, her Royal Highness desired her to follow her to her room, which she did, without any idea who the kind lady was.

After looking at the articles, the Princess asked who it was that had made them? The girl said that she herself had done most of the work. The Princess said it was done very nicely. She then drew from her that she had a sick mother, whom she was obliged to leave alone while she went to a shop to work; but that she hoped that at some time she might have a machine of her own, and be able to work at home, and earn something more than bread for her sick mother.

The Princess rang the bell and ordered a bottle of wine, some biscuits and oranges, to be packed and brought to her. She then asked the wondering girl where she

lived, and took down the address with her own hand. She then gave her the delicacies, which had been put into a neat little basket, and told her to take them to her mother.

On Christmas morning, into the clean apartment of the sick mother and her astonished and delighted daughter, was carried a handsome sewing machine. On it was a slip of paper, with the words, "A Christmas gift from Alexandra."

Now which do you think was the happiest, the good lady or the poor girl? We can scarcely say; but we are quite sure that the Princess was not the least happiest of the two. For our Saviour said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

HARRY'S HOME.

A LITTLE boy, whom we will call Henry, had been for some time in a Ragged School. He had a sad, wretched home. His parents were drunkards: almost all the money they could obtain was spent upon themselves in the gin-shop; and their poor children had scarcely even rags to cover them, and often were obliged to pass a whole day without food. It is terrible to think how much those children must have suffered, and how cruelly they had been driven to sly pilfering or daring thievery, by the wicked neglect of their besotted father and mother. When Henry was admitted into the School, one of his brothers had been transported as a thief; and another, younger than himself, was in prison for having stolen to keep himself from starvation.

I have said that Henry's home was a wretched one; let me describe it. There was but one room for the whole family, which had to serve as a sleeping-room at night as well as a living-room by day. In one corner of the dirty unswept floor, was a scanty heap of shavings for a bed, upon which they all huddled themselves together for rest—without blanket, rug, or even rags to cover them from the cold air. On the mantel-shelf were two cups, and by the fire-grate, in which was seldom to be seen a handful of burning coals, was an old tin kettle without a lid. Chairs there were none, nor a table, nor a cupboard for food. Alas! seldom even a day's supply of dry bread alone was ever found there.

Though Henry had such a home, and such depraved parents, he was far from being a dull, stupid, obstinate, discontented, or badly disposed child. He seemed to have been preserved, in a great measure, from the contagion of wickedness by which he was surrounded; and after he had been a little time at the Ragged School, none of his schoolfellows were more cheerful, diligent, and well-behaved; while out of School he was quite the life of his playmates, on account of his good tempered and happy disposition. It would have been a sad thing if such a boy had been driven by want and cruelty to the commission of crime. Surely it was the sovereign mercy of God that led him to the Ragged School, and there provided him with friends who were better to him than his own neglectful parents.

It was a pleasure to see little Henry enter the School every day with a cheerful step, and clean face and hands. It was a good trait of his character that he cared at all about cleanliness, for this he did not learn of his mother, who cared for little else than her own appetite, and was more fond of the gin-shop than her own home. Indeed it was not without some trouble that Henry could keep himself clean, for he had neither soap, towel, nor bowl to use. But where there is a will there is generally a way; and after rising from his bed of shavings, the boy used to take an old rag into the back yard of the house, and well wash himself with water from a butt which stood in the corner. After all, however, poor Henry was a pitiable object. His clothes were deplorably old and ragged, and he had neither shoes nor stockings to his feet.

Henry's cheerfulness and perseverance gained the goodwill of his teachers, who gave him, as a reward for his conduct, a

pair of shoes and stockings—the first he ever remembered to have had. It was very cold weather; the snow lay thick on the ground; and the poor boy was overjoyed with the present. The next day, however, he came to School barefoot as usual, carrying the shoes and stockings in his hand.

"How is this?" said his teacher.

"Oh, sir," he replied, "you see my feet are all over chilblains; I could not bear the shoes on, they hurt me so much but I would not leave them at home, for if I had I should not have seen them again. My mother would part with them to get money for drink. You know, sir, my mother would have drank me before now if she could."

Our Library Table.

Introductory Spelling. By W. C. PEARCE. London: Murby.

This little work forms one of the "Excelsior School Series." It conducts the learner through the mysteries of the primer up to syllables. It supplies many well-concocted spelling lessons, with hiatus to be filled up by the scholars. It also gives brief definitions, where words with different meanings have the same pronunciation. The usefulness of this work is much enhanced by the accentuation of words. In these and other ways Mr. Pearce gives valuable aid in acquiring the rudiments of spelling a language which, from its composite character, is the most difficult of all tongues. When looking at its numerous instances of our eccentricities in pronunciation, we could not help thinking of the Frenchman's remark, "I not know how to speak; it no use; for when I spell 'Nebuchadnezzar,' I not know whether you not pronounce it 'Nightingale.'"

Easy Bible Lessons. By FRANCES MARY. London: Jarrold.

These Bible lessons give a clear and concise outline of Bible history from the creation to the imprisonment of Peter. To each lesson full questions are appended, which are well calculated to initiate junior Sunday School teachers into the most difficult of all arts, namely, that of catechising. This has rendered them of much service to those senior scholars who are occasionally called to take classes when the staff is small. The fruits of the experience of a voluntary teacher in a provincial Ragged School, these lessons are as simple in language as they are in structure. But what is of equal importance in this day of open or veiled scepticism, the theology is sound and clear, Christ being presented not only as an example, but as the sole atonement for sin, a doctrine which is equally hated by Romanist and Rationalist.

Notices of Meetings.

LAMB AND FLAG, CLERKENWELL.

AT this institute an interesting meeting was held on the 11th of August. One of the objects was to present Mr. W. J. Watts with a handsomely-framed address on vellum, and signed by thirty-two teachers, on his resignation of the office of honorary secretary, which he had held for upwards of twenty-one years. During that long period he worked hard for the School, and much of its success is due to his labours. The love and esteem of both the teachers and children were won by his affectionate intercourse. Mr. Watts was much affected with this unlooked-for mark of respect, and replied

in terms showing how deeply he felt the kindly feeling which prompted the givers. He said that although business, coupled with ill-health, compelled him to resign the office of honorary secretary, he should ever entertain a deep-seated love for the place in which he had felt it a pleasure and an honour to labour for the Master so long. Mr. Watts said that he was glad that his place was filled up by one whom he felt assured had the welfare and interest of the work at heart, viz., their chairman that evening, Mr. George Soltau.

The same evening a handsome set of chimney-piece ornaments were presented to Mrs. Alderton, the widow of the late treasurer. It consisted of two vases and a lustre, as a small token of gratitude and love, from the teachers, for her great kindness in carrying on the treasurership after her beloved husband's decease. To this Mr. Curtis replied for her in appropriate terms.

After a short address, given by the new honorary secretary, by way of encouragement to the teachers, the happy gathering separated.

SOUTHWARK.

A PUBLIC meeting was recently held in behalf of the Ragged Schools attached to St. George's, Southwark. The Rev. Hugh Allen, D.D., presided.

The report stated that the Committee had under its supervision two Schools. The Collier's Rents School is at present only opened on Sundays, and is attended by 180 scholars. A class for the study of the Sunday lessons is held one week night. It is also probable that a Night School will be opened by the voluntary teachers during the winter months. The Marlton Street School has flourishing Sunday, Day, and Night Schools, the united attendance at which exceeds 200. There is also a large Penny Bank, which is much appreciated by the poor of the district.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Ragged School movement was a necessary thing in these days. True, there ought not to be a necessity for them. It was once said that Ragged Schools ought not to be needed. He (the Chairman) agreed with that statement; but as things were, Ragged Schools were necessary. There were several facts which would prove their necessity. First, sin was in the world; and while sin was in the world, there would be a necessity for such an institution. But there was also another cause for the necessity of Ragged Schools, and that was the dreadful state of the dwellings of the poor—dreadful dwellings at a high rental. Many a man was driven into evil because his home was such that it drove him into the streets. Better houses ought to be built for the poor, and if it were not a profitable speculation for private persons, then let the Government attend to it. It was the paramount duty of the Government to take up this question. The Prime Minister had done many things for which some were angry. The country had been brought to the borders of democracy, and it would be a good redeeming point if the Premier would now take up this question of houses for the poor. There was much said of building societies, and what the working man could do; how that Whittington had been thrice Lord Mayor of London. But this was mere trash. Building societies were good things, but there were many who could not be sure of three months' constant work in the year, and hence it was useless talking to such about saving money; so that Ragged Schools were necessary things, and were calculated to do a great amount of good in poor localities. The rev. doctor concluded by observing that the Ragged Schools in the parish of St. George-the-Martyr were in prosperity, and he was anxious to increase them, but as he did not like debt, he asked his parishioners and friends for help.

The Rev. Dr. Milburn (a blind clergyman from America), Rev. Dr. Spencer, Rev. G. Todd, T. W. Wilson, &c., also addressed the meeting.

Papers, Original and Selected.

DEATH IN THE LONDON SLUMS.

PARISH MORTUARIES.

LAST month we directed the attention of our readers to a pressing social evil, namely, the growth of crime in its worst form—that of juvenile professional theft. This month we wish to call attention to another social evil, which, if not so glaring on the surface, is still doing much to deteriorate, if not to poison, the health of our poorer brethren—we refer to the habit of the very poor of keeping the bodies of their dead relations in their one living room until their burial. We do this because we consider that this growing evil—the result more of ignorance than of wilfulness—has a reflex influence on our work; for all that affects the health of the districts where we are called to labour must of necessity also affect the health of our scholars and teachers, and thus any physical evil has a direct bearing on our special work as managers or friends of Ragged Schools.

Some years ago, a great panic was excited by the publication of a book, written by an experienced chemist, with the startling title of, "Death in the Pot!" It fully showed by analyses that most articles of food were so adulterated as to become changed into so much poison. From facts which have recently cropped out, it would seem that there is now an equal call for a book to be entitled, "Death in the London Slums." All who know anything of the habits of the poor know how *fashionable*—for they have their fashions as much as their social superiors—it is for them to keep the bodies of their deceased relatives beyond any reasonable time. They may have been cut off by putrid fever or by cholera, but still the tainted and tainting corpse is kept in their one living and sleeping room to scatter disease, if not death, all around. Their plea, when remonstrated with—and it is made in all good faith—is either that they "wish to show proper respect to the dead," or that they have not yet collected sufficient funds to pay for a respectable funeral. Haunted by this idea of a "respectable"

funeral, they expend sums quite out of proportion to their incomes, begging and borrowing in all directions for this purpose; but, when too independent to defray the expenses of a costly funeral at the cost of friends, they use the money paid by their burial or sick clubs for that purpose, for in every case they say that they "will not let their relatives be buried like a dog."

The following cases will show better than any argument the evil of thus keeping the dead in the houses of the living:—In Woolmore Street, Poplar, a poor man recently died of fever, and for several days before his burial his body was kept in the one room occupied by his wife and children. This hapless woman had been recently confined, and she and her babe and her other children continued to live, to eat and sleep, in the narrow chamber where lay the corpse, exhaling pestilence and death.

The misery of such a scene needs no description. It was thought the worst invention of cruelty when a tyrant tied his living victim to a dead body. But is it not as terrible for a poor mother, still lying on her bed of weakness, to live for days with a decaying corpse in the same small room? Dr. Cross, of Spring Gardens, informs us that some time ago he had to interfere in a similar case. In a court in Wild Street, Drury Lane, a dead child was lying for several days in the single room occupied by the father and mother and their other children. It appears that, though they were too proud to let it be buried by the parish, they were not too proud to send round the begging box to pay the expenses of its funeral. On Dr. Cross's interposition, in the interests of the health of a district which he has watched so assiduously, the sanitary inspector interfered, and the child was at once buried.

Dr. Hardwicke recently held an inquest on an aged woman who died in a house crowded from cellar to garret with lodgers. There she lay several days, to the serious injury, if not blood-poisoning, of the living. Dr. Hardwicke, in connection with this case, referred to "the desirability of establishing a new order of dead-houses, differing within and without from the repulsive dens which are known as parochial dead-houses in London, for the reception of bodies which, by being kept until the day of burial in the homes of the poor, tend to injure the health, and greatly inconvenience the survivors. Persons who live in comparative comfort are never in haste to part with their dead—the parting, indeed, though inevitable, is painful. It is otherwise with the extremely poor. They are not less sensitive to the moral of death in the house; but their

only bed may be that on which the corpse is laid, and it often happens that four or five persons have to live the whole twenty-four hours round, for several days in succession, in the same room with a dead body. Suppose the room to be small, which is likely enough; suppose also the body to be offensive to the senses, and there needs no more building up of a plea for the establishment of decent mortuaries."

Not rarely, however, the parish authorities are more to blame than our poorer brethren in this respect, for they have not the plea of ignorance to palliate this social crime. For example, some time ago we were requested by the poor women living in New Tothill Street, Westminster, to visit a dilapidated building in the same narrow street. As an unbearable stench had penetrated into the Ragged School, we complied with their desire. Acclimatised as we are to bad smells, we could scarcely bear to enter the shed, for as a poor bystander graphically said, "the smell was almost enough to knock you down." When we entered the shed the secret was soon unveiled, for there we saw several coffins, with the bodies of paupers who had died of all possible diseases. How long they had been lying there we had no means of ascertaining, but that some were in a decomposed state our senses testified. But whether the period was long or short, there they were lying, wafting diseases in a district already notorious for fever or cholera, the parish authorities being the sole culprits! As we threatened to write to the newspapers and expose this fever den, the dead bodies were removed within the next twenty-four hours, and we are glad to say that this flagrant evil has not re-occurred.

But cannot this evil of keeping the dead in the homes of the living be remedied? Assuredly it can, but by one means only, namely, the erection of PARISH MORTUARIES. Following the example of Germany, they are provided for by the Sanitary Act of 1866, though as yet public mortuaries are few and far between. In Liverpool, however, such a mortuary has been erected. At first, the Irish, from their love of the ceremony called "the wake," refused to part with their dead; but their prejudices were at last overcome, and they now readily avail themselves of the benefit of the public mortuary.

Parish mortuaries should be erected at convenient spots in the districts where the poor abound; should be well lighted and ventilated; and, if surrounded by trees, they might be rendered as ornamental as our cemeteries, and so aid in removing any disinclination

to their use. In this way we think our disused graveyards might be utilised. Valuable as they now are as breathing-places, their benefits would be much increased were the parish mortuaries erected there, as is the case with that erected in the graveyard of Paddington Street, Marylebone. If they did nothing else, they would at least teach a lesson of decency to our poorer brethren; but who could measure their physical benefits to the whole of London?

At the first glance, such an early removal of the dead from the homes of the living might be supposed to interfere with those family affections which, as of Divine origin, cannot be too much cultivated. But even were this the case, family affections cannot be permitted to interfere with the general good; and this is one reason why fever patients are at once removed from the one living room of the poor to the fever hospital. But, happily, in this, as in all kindred cases, what is found to tend to the public weal is also found to subserve the interests of the individual.

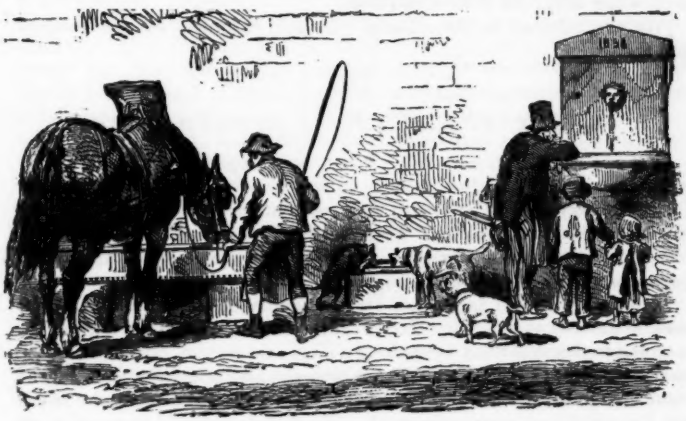
In order to make the clauses of the Sanitary Act which refer to the erection of parish mortuaries really serviceable, their use must be made *compulsory* on all who only rent one room. This would not prevent the relatives from paying "proper respect to the dead," for they might be allowed to visit the mortuary at appointed hours until the day of interment. By this plan, disease would doubtless be prevented in many cases, and in not a few it would be found a link in the chain whereby the Creator keeps death from the homestead. Thus we should give a practical reply to the question of the wise king (Eccles. vii. 17), "Why shouldest thou die before thy time?"

During the past thirty years much has been done to prevent the ravages of death in our poorer districts by our ceasing to bury the dead amid the homes of the living. Nor can we doubt that the remarkable increase in the average duration of human life during the past thirty years is in part due to the compulsory use of cemeteries away from crowded thoroughfares. It now remains for us to extend the precedent, and thus to prevent the recurrence of such scenes as we have described in Poplar and St. Giles. But this can be done in one way only, that is, by the erection of parish mortuaries for the use of those whose one room is parlour, kitchen, and bedroom. In this way we should practically imitate the example of that pattern husband and father, Abraham, who, instead of letting the corpse of his beloved Sarah contaminate the camp, said, 'Bury my dead out of my sight!"

DRINKING FOUNTAINS.

BY THE REV. W. BAIRD, M.A., VICAR OF DYMOCK.

A HOT day in the dusty streets is a time of temptation to our hard-worked poor. The public-house, standing with its door ajar, invites many a father to spend, in adulterated beer or ardent spirits, the pence which would enable him to purchase some little extra comfort for his wife and children at home. Yet it is only a few years since the public-house was absolutely the only place where he could get a draught to quench his thirst. The scene pictured in our illustration could not then have been witnessed in the streets of London.



It seemed to some benevolent persons to be strange indeed that, while intoxicating drinks could be purchased at the corner of every street, it was next to an impossibility for the thirsty to procure a drop of pure water. In April 1859 an Association was established for the purpose of erecting free drinking-fountains in different parts of London. Since its establishment the Association has been enabled to open one hundred and ten drinking-fountains, in addition to thirty or forty which have been put up by private individuals. These fountains are, for the most part, very tasteful in their construction. They are not unfrequently adorned with a suitable text out of the Holy Scriptures, thus applying "living water" to the soul, while they provide a refreshing draught for the perishing body.

Some interesting statistics are furnished in the Eighth Annual Report of the Association as to the number of persons who avail themselves of the benefits offered to them. At a fountain in a prominent position near St. Botolph's Church, Bishopsgate, it was computed that, in twenty-four hours, 6,666 persons had come to drink; while at the fountain near the Royal Exchange, there had been, during the same period, 5,603 drinkers.

On the principle of "*Love me, love my dog*," the Association has added to

its original work that of putting up cattle-troughs, so that it now provides (to use the language of the old hostelries), "good accommodation for man and beast."

The work of the Association is by no means complete. At least two hundred more fountains are required, so that each parish in the metropolis may have one. Surely it is a pleasanter sight in our streets to see the workmen drink out of the little metal cup, brimming with clear water, attached to each fountain, than to see them lurching, with unsteady gait, out of the swing-doors of the corner public-house.

We earnestly believe that those who provide this "cup of cold water" in our streets for the wayfaring man will not be without their reward; and we trust they may be found among the number of those who "with joy shall draw water out of the wells of salvation."

[We are indebted to the editor of "Church Progress" for the woodcut and sketch.]

A SUNDAY AT FIELD LANE RAGGED SCHOOL.

It is not our intention in this paper to enter upon a description of the week-day work of this institution. It is not a single institution, but, as Canon Conway happily styled it, "a constellation of institutions," a mere glance at which must suffice. There are Day, Infant, and *Babies'* schools, morning and afternoon every day, except Saturday, and should the reader pay them a visit, he will be well repaid.

Let us look at Field Lane, as, in its combination of institutions, it may be seen vigorously at work any Lord's day. At a quarter past nine in the morning we begin the day by entering a large school-room, capable of accommodating a thousand children. The "Bible School" is about to be held, and there are already present many of the poor little waifs and strays who attend the Ragged School during the week. The "Bible School," however, is not intended merely for children, and many besides are present. There are the mothers of many of the children, the inmates of the male and female refuges, and a few strangers who have dropped in. There may be perhaps between three and four hundred men, women, and children present. "Sunday clothes" are not in the ascendant, and many faces are pinched by want and care; but hands and faces are well washed, the best is made of a poor garment, and a more orderly assembly you would not wish to see. There is a good staff of voluntary teachers in attendance, whose work from sabbath to sabbath is a labour of love. A hymn is given out, and sung with more feeling than accuracy, and you feel that it is very pleasant and heart-stirring, —something to thank God for that the praises of Jesus are being sung in a locality so notorious for profligacy and crime as Saffron Hill. A chapter in the Bible is next read, and after that a simple prayer is offered. Classes are then formed, each teacher taking charge of from ten to twenty in a class; there will be perhaps about thirty classes altogether. The infants and two senior classes are taught in separate class-rooms; there is also a separate class of young women, and another for lads who once attended the Ragged School, but who are now in service, or in other employments.

About an hour and a half is spent in teaching, after which the Schools are closed, and we prepare to attend service in the Ragged Church, the service commencing at a quarter to eleven, and terminating at a quarter past twelve. The Ragged Church was first organised in the old premises, in 1852, and it has ever since been attended by some of the poorest of the poor from all parts of the metropolis. Since the opening of the new school-room the congregation has greatly increased, and there are seldom less than 800 persons present. Last year the smallest congregation was 693, and the largest 1,384. A marked characteristic of the Ragged Church is, that it is principally attended by men; thus more than 900 men formed part of the largest congregation just referred to. If you ask, "Where do all these people come from?" the reply is, "Unlike the attendants at most churches and chapels, the majority of the congregation do not come from the immediate district. Many come from Paddington, New Cut, Whitechapel, and Clapham. Our prisons and casual wards supply no small quota; while the tramps who have wandered in from the provinces are amply represented. In the old premises you might generally see an aged beggar who had crawled to the service from Whitechapel. Many of the former inmates of the Refuge, having got on in life, have such grateful remembrances of Old Field Lane, that they still attend the service."

A strange flock indeed is the congregation of the Ragged Church, forcibly reminding you of the assembly that was gathered in to the supper-room of the master who commanded his servant to "go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, into the highways and hedges, and to bring in the poor and the maimed, the halt and the blind." The service is of an informal character, but admirably adapted to the congregation. The singing is warm and hearty, the prayers simple and earnest, the preaching practical, earnest, and evangelical. No minister could ever desire a more attentive and orderly congregation, or one more responsive to the appeals of the gospel. Frequently during the sermon faces will be seen furrowed by tears; and at the close of the service anxious ones have remained to converse with the preacher of the morning about the things which make for their peace. Lord Shaftesbury, after attending one of these services, was so deeply impressed by what he saw and heard, that he could scarcely find words in which to express his sense of their value. It was most remarkable, his lordship said, that among so many of the destitute class of the community there should be found so many evidently willing to learn,—evidently willing to be instructed in the truths of the Christian religion. If you ask for "results" in connection with these interesting services a strong array of facts can be presented to prove that the Holy Spirit has carried home the word preached to many hearts. Our space will only admit of one striking example. One Sunday morning a respectable looking young man asked the preacher at the close of the service if he might speak a few words to the congregation. As the request, unusual as it was, was made in modest and earnest tones, permission was given. He stated that he had wasted his patrimonial estate in riotous living, and came to the Refuge from Ireland, a broken-down man. At first he regarded all religious exhortations with disdain; but at length the word came home with such power, that he felt how foolish he had been. He took the burden of his sins and sorrows to the Saviour, and at length found peace in the blood

of the Lamb. "I came here ragged, as you know," he said; "but I would rather have my rags than my former riches, so as to be able to say what I can now say, I have found Christ." This young man continued steadfast in the faith, and is only one out of many instances which might be given of those who have blessed God even for poverty, because they were led to seek after the true riches.

Upon the conclusion of the Ragged Church service, each person is presented with a half-pound loaf, and, in the case of only too many, this is all the food they will get until they return to the casual wards at night. The inmates of the Refuge have a humble repast served out, and they are now free to converse with each other, to read or sing (there is a harmonium in the male Refuge), until half-past two. Then the afternoon Bible Schools are held, and are conducted just as in the morning, until four. The afternoon schools however, are better attended than the morning; and the attendance in the evening from half-past six until eight o'clock is larger still.

In addition to the Bible Schools, in the evening two very interesting classes or services are conducted, one for youths of fourteen or fifteen years of age, and the other for the parents of the children who attend the Day Schools.

At the Lord's Day Evening Service for parents, the attendance varies from forty to one hundred persons. During the winter, when a warm room is a luxury not easily within the reach of the poor, the attendance is very good; but it falls off during the summer months. The service is conducted by voluntary agency, by Christian men not only able to speak of that gospel which they themselves have tasted and handled, but well acquainted with the habits of the people who form the congregation. The preachers speak hopefully of the attention paid to them, and of the interest manifested in their instructions. Many aged people seem very much to enjoy the service, and some who have recently died have with their latest breath expressed their gratitude to God, that this door of hope had been opened to the poor.

Such is Sunday life at Field Lane. Great as are the temporal benefits it dispenses—for upwards of ten thousand persons annually share some of the benefits of the institution, and on an average one thousand seven hundred are placed in a position to earn their daily bread—great as are its temporal, its religious advantages are far greater. All the operations of the institution are conducted in a deeply religious spirit. "We dedicate this building," it was said at the opening of the new house, "to the service and glory of God, in the interests of the poor, the ignorant, the fatherless, the homeless, and the lost."—*Sunday at Home.*

CITY ARABS IN THE HOP GARDENS.

During the months of September and October, visitors are often struck by the thin attendance at the southern Ragged Schools. So much is this the case, that the Schools in Croydon and Woolwich are diminished about one-third; the absentees being mostly the children of the classes who are always at the point of starvation. When we have asked the teachers the cause, the reply has always been, "They have gone hop-picking."

When these children have returned to School from their six weeks' country excursion, they have looked fatter, and rosier, and physically improved; but we are sorry to say that they have usually so much deteriorated in morals as to lead us to regard hop-picking as a curse rather than a blessing. Nor can we wonder at this demoralisation. For they camp out in the open fields—work hard all day, and sleep promiscuously—men, women, and children—at night; and obscene jokes and songs form their only amusement on week-nights and Sundays.

We are glad, then, to learn that something is being done for their spiritual welfare, whilst thus camping in the fields; and can only desire that hop-growers may be led in future to pay as much attention to their housing at night as they do to their cattle. A writer in the "Revival" thus describes his home missionary work in the hop gardens.

One of the most interesting, and, I hope, profitable days I ever spent, was on Sabbath, September 12. On the morning of this day the wind was blowing very roughly, and fears were entertained with regard to the wet. Myself and Mr. Harrison left home for a camp-meeting. We got to the place about ten o'clock, and found them huddled together; poor creatures, the only shelter they had was the hedge and a few hop-poles, with straw. Some were cooking; others washing. We told them we were come to tell them of a better world, and of the love of Jesus. One man declared if the devil did not have his master, he was quite sure he would never go to the other place. We reminded him of his own responsibility. He was a little rough at first, but soon became calm, and was the most interesting person in the group. We soon succeeded in getting a hearing, and the poor creatures left their huts and came and sat down on the poles and straw. As soon as we got them quiet, I said, "Now let us all try and lift up our hearts to God in singing his praise." I gave out—

"Oh have you not heard of a beautiful stream,
That flows through our Father's land?
Its waters gleam bright in the heavenly light,
And ripple o'er golden sand.
Oh, seek that beautiful stream.
Its waters so free are flowing for thee;
Oh, seek that beautiful stream."

After singing this hymn, I addressed them from John iii., on the necessity and nature of the new birth. Deep earnestness was manifested and attention paid. When I closed my address, brother Harrison gave out another hymn ("Just as I am," etc.), and this was sung with zest. He addressed them on their immediate acceptance of Christ.

At the close of the service they asked for another, so we gave out that another service would be held in the afternoon, at two o'clock. At the appointed time Mr. Harrison and his devoted wife went off to the camp. It was deeply interesting to see the man who was rough in the morning now the first to come out, and as the meeting was held at another part of the field, he was seen coming running across with an old sack to sit on. There for another hour Mr. Harrison and his wife directed the poor wandering tribe to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Many

were the thanks of these dear people. Oh that some of our professing Christians would only lend us help, or come and see for themselves—ay, and work, too! I am sure they would be blessed in their own souls.

In the evening of this day a deeply-interesting meeting was held in a field, where there were seventeen tents, and these inhabitants were more like animals than human beings. Children nearly naked, their hair all matted together, and huddled together like sheep. Here, among this class, the good old gospel was found to possess a charm. While the story of the cross was told, the eye glistened and the tear fell, which showed, amidst the moral wreck, the word did not return void. A singular incident happened at this meeting. One of the poor mothers, having some idea of the form of Christianity, had six children, with no proper name to distinguish them from the rest of the family. She requested that they might be "christened;" "as," said she, "the likes of us never goes to church." Accordingly, an old man went and fetched a basin of water, and each child was sprinkled, and the following names given:—Henry, Mary Ann, John, James, Hiram, Dorcas. They at the same time were reminded that this was not salvation. This meeting closed with the hearty thanks and best wishes of these poor but dear people.

AUSTRALIAN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

We are sorry to find that in such new and under-peopled colonies as those at the Antipodes, there should be found classes akin to those which fester in the "slums" of the mother country. But it would seem that, wherever large masses of people are congregated, there will be always found many who must be numbered amongst the lapsed classes. Sometimes it is the result of bodily or mental infirmity, but more often it is the terrible legacy of uncontrolled parental vice, especially drunkenness. It is so in New York, the notorious "Five Points" being but a reproduction of our St. Giles's.

This fact some years ago led to the establishhment of Ragged Schools, in Auckland, New Zealand, and Sydney, N. S. Wales: the latter being superintended by an old worker in the London Ragged Schools. In the four Schools established in these colonial capitals, about 1,000 scholars and adults are now gathered, and all the agencies, from Sunday School to Ragged Church, found so potent in our great towns, have been gradually introduced, and are all progressing satisfactorily. As here, so there, members of the different branches of the One Church steadily work together for the honour of their common Master. As a result of this labour for Christ rather than for sect, the work has been signally blessed, and many juvenile Arabs have been saved both for time and eternity.

A similar school was opened in Melbourne in 1867. Though consisting of the same class as form the bulk of our Night Schools, it is known by the novel name of the Young Traders' Schools. We are indebted to an Australian friend for the following sketch of the Melbourne Ragged School:—There are few portions of the community more universally known, if not respected, than the juvenile traders of Melbourne. Go where you will, you

are confronted with one or more of the fraternity, seeking to earn a livelihood by one of those multifarious means known to few but themselves. Rags and old bottles have charms to them which are unappreciated by the uninitiated. They are posted in the price current for bones, and broken metal is a marketable commodity which forms a staple of their trade. Matches and the daily journals afford a wide field for the exercise of their energies while with them "'Evening Herald' a penny! full account of the murder" is a "consummation devoutly to be wished." But, with all their prominence before the public, they are, in consequence of some of their black sheep, in bad odour with their patrons, who look upon them as "a lot of unmitigated young ruffians." This harsh verdict would in all probability be considerably modified, if not in some instances reversed, were the public better acquainted with the undercurrent of this stream of humanity.

Our own views were modified considerably by a visit we paid a few nights since to the "Young Traders' School," Latrobe-street East. Nearly opposite the police barracks we arrived at the Jewish School, and here, plunging down a flight of unlighted stone steps, we entered an underground cellar of no considerable size. On looking round the room the first feeling was one of disappointment, the walls presenting a cold and damp appearance, relieved only here and there by a hymn in large print pasted conspicuously against them. The ceiling, too, was low, and a chilling and fitful draft pervaded the building. We, however, soon discovered a redeeming feature in the person of Mr. George W. Williamson, the paid teacher, one in every way suited to the difficult position he occupies. Then the sight of a large number of these lads intently engaged in voluntarily seeking to derive the benefits of education was sufficient to lend an attraction to the place that little else could give. Their earnestness and attention were remarkable, and with the exception of a little exuberance occasionally of spirits the order was perfect. By the way, this excess of spirits on the part of one of the urchins nearly sent in the crown of our hat, but as he was not successful we forgive him.

During the evening we had an opportunity of testing the proficiency of the "young traders" present, and we have no hesitation in saying that, considering their limited opportunities, they will compare favourably in reading, writing, and arithmetic with many of the common schools of the colony.

The School, which is but little known, was established in the August of 1867, and since that time has been unobtrusively carrying on a great work. The attendance (which from the nature of the lads' occupations varies much) averages about forty, while on some occasions it reaches over fifty, the number on the roll being about 100, all of whom attend more or less regularly. The expenses amount to about £120 per annum, which has been hitherto subscribed among the promoters; but now the requirements of the School are rapidly increasing and the necessity of a more commodious and healthy room is pressing upon the attention of the committee. In helping such a work the public will do much towards the suppression of crime, the eradication of ignorance, and the amelioration of the condition of a section of our community which is comparatively impotent to assist itself in the right direction, though it has a multitude of facilities for going wrong.

In Memoriam.

MR. JOHN VANDERKISTE.

THIRTY years ago, the writer and Mr. John Vanderkiste were clerks in City houses in London. They were frequenters of a respectable glee club, played quiet games of billiards and backgammon, for purely nominal stakes, went occasionally to the theatre, smoked much, and drank a little, avoided what is called by the world bad company, deprecated oaths and profane language. In short, they were what the world calls highly-respectable young men. And yet they were of the very class from which blackguards, drunkards, gamblers, spendthrifts, and cheats spring. Great and blessed changes, however, were near. A severe fit of illness sent the writer, for the benefit of his health, into a Methodist village in Suffolk; here he was thrown amongst a class of people, to whose habits he was previously an entire stranger, and to whom he had felt many groundless antipathies. There is a very remarkable history connected with this visit. Suffice it to say, that his conviction and conversion occupied about one-quarter of an hour. But not so, however, be it remembered, the "line upon line, and precept upon precept," to which the Divine Spirit applied his sacred fire. The writer at once wrote an account of what had transpired to the subject of this obituary, and urged upon him to at once give his heart to God. A week or so brought the reply, that he had thoroughly weighed what I had written, and should from that time set his soul to do as I advised. He did so. He read the book which had signally blessed me, "Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," he followed out my various directions, and very soon, "being justified by faith," he "had peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Immediately on his conversion, John Vanderkiste at once set himself to work in the vineyard of the Lord. A course of usefulness commenced, from which he never deviated. The writer recovered, and returned to London, and found him *at work*. Captain Blackmore's remarkable career was then in its rising, like my brother's. That well-known philanthropist was blown out of his frigate at Chatham, by an explosion of portable powder magazines, and escaped death. This providence produced his conversion, and the injuries he sustained consigning him to half-pay, he was at one stroke provided with grace, means, and leisure to carry out a most remarkable mission among fallen women.

The Ragged School movement received his aid. He stood on the Committee of the first Ragged School in London, and afterwards, when it was formed, on the Committee of the Ragged School Union, Mr. Tomkins, the then London City Missionary of the Field Lane district, and the writer, whose district, Cow Cross, joined, hired a house at their own risk in Fox

and Knot Court, and commenced the Refuge department, and he was among the first to assist. And here I cannot forbear to pause for one moment to mention the name of the late Samuel Gurney. Whilst the Field Lane Refuge is now pictured nearly all over the world, and it well deserves so to be, with a revenue of some three thousand pounds, how few are aware that when its funds did not amount to ten pounds, when its responsibility rested entirely on the shoulders of two poor men, and no Committee could be found to undertake it, when it was supported from day to day by begging letters, written in the "small hours," that *he* was the man, who, after listening quietly to our narrative, handed a cheque for £60, saying, "If thou require more, thou canst come unto me."

Promotion in the service of the Bank of England was offered to my brother. Thorough ability as a man of business, coupled with some interest, might very probably have led, in the course of thirty years, to his occupying a very different position at Threadneedle Street to that of a plain bank clerk. But the first promotion kindly offered would have necessitated a removal to one of the provinces, away from those arenas of usefulness into which he had thrown his leisure. The writer well remembers his coming to him with the detail of this promotion difficulty. He was, however, enabled to decline without offence, and possessing some private means, preferred a plain position in the house with small salary, and hours from nine a.m. to half-past three p.m., to any other. He walked or rode home, dined at four, took an early tea, and was away to Refuges, Ragged Schools, temperance meetings, committee meetings, and thence to "cruise" with Captain Blackmore into the still hours of the morning amongst fallen women, as a press-gang, to inveigle them into refuges and the service of the Redeemer. This was his steady and calm course, month by month, and year by year, until the Lord had need of him for higher service in heaven.

We believe that the question *is* very much what time a man gets up, but we believe also with the celebrated Robert Hall, that "the question is not so much what time a man gets up, as what he does when he is up." John Vanderkiste rose up betimes, and sat up late, to a good purpose, and now he has gone where it is written, "There shall be no night there," where the inhabitants never sleep, because they are never weary.

R. W. V.

MATT, THE IDIOT BOY.

A LADY wandering along the sea-coast of an English watering-place, observed a boy intently gazing up at a small space between the clouds. Drawing close to him, she said, "What are you looking at, my boy?" The child made no answer. "Boy, boy," said she, shaking him gently by the sleeve, "what are you doing?" The boy sighed, rubbed his eyes, shaded them, looked up again, and said, with earnestness, "Matt was looking for God. Matt wants to see God." The clouds closed, and, as if to comfort himself for the disappointment, he said in a more cheerful tone, "Matt shall see God some day."

At this time, a little girl ran out of a cottage, calling out, "Matt, come

home; dinner is ready." The lady followed, and being asked to walk in, she learned that Matt was an orphan, about thirteen years of age, living with an aunt and grandfather.

After this she often called, and one day found the old man ill. A minister of Christ shortly afterwards came in, and read the 18th of Matthew. When he came to the parable of the "King that would take account of his servants," Matt's attention became riveted. When he had finished, Matt turned to him earnestly, saying, "Parson, read some more." Mr. Green began to relate the parable thus:—"A great king said" (and in speaking, he pointed upwards), "'Bring my servants to me, and I will make them pay me all the pounds that they owe me.' And they brought one servant that owed a thousand pence,—*a great many, a great many!* And he had no pence to pay; and the king said, 'He shall be put in prison, and never come out any more till all the money is paid.'" The tears trickled down the poor boy's cheeks; his countenance showed great alarm, and rushing to the beach, he threw himself down and wept piteously.

The next day the lady found him again in his usual attitude, looking up; and not until she noticed him did he notice her. "What is Matt doing?" she asked.

"Matt was talking to God," he replied.

"What did poor Matt say?"

The boy, joining hands, looked up with a piteous expression of submission and fear, and said, "Good God, Matt has no money to pay!"

And then, shaking his head, he told her, with the deepest emotion, that he was going to be put in prison;—God was going to put Matt in prison.

The lady, taking both his hands, to fix his attention, said cheerfully, "Jesus Christ has paid for poor Matt. God will not put Matt in prison *now*. Jesus Christ has paid all for Matt."

An expression of wonder overspread his countenance. He repeated over and over the comforting words, and sat down to hear them again and again. A long time did Matt sit in the shelter of a boat, *silent*,—so long that his friend feared that, now his fears were calmed, he might have forgotten their cause; but not so; at length he arose, walked a few paces, and, lifting his arms and face to heaven, cried out, in a loud, clear voice,—"Man that paid—man that paid—Matt says, thank you, thank you!"

The grandfather died, and Matt was told that he went to God, and that God would soon send for him also. This took such possession of Matt's mind, that he would ask for his new cap, and have his hands washed, that he might be ready when God would send for him. "God would send for Matt some day," he repeated softly; "perhaps it would be to-day, and Matt must be ready; Matt must *always* be ready."

One day he inquired of the lady what kind of place it was that God would take him to.

"It is never cold there," she said; "no one will be hungry or sick."

"Will any one beat me there?"

"No, God will take care of Matt."

A gleam of joy stole over the vacant face, and he said, "Rob beats Matt now."

A time of trouble came: his aunt died; and poor Matt was found, one

cold, snowy morning, nearly frozen to death in a cave, his dying voice uttering these words:—"Matt shall see God some day. Matt will never be cold any more. God! God! and man that paid! oh, take poor Matt away." The young person who found him ran for assistance, but before Matt was removed, the spirit had passed away.

Happy Matt! Yes, reader, the poor idiot boy was happy, for, like many a Ragged School scholar, he had laid hold upon the gospel message, that Jesus has paid the debt of sin.

STORING FOR GLORY.

If a man will lay up for himself a store of blessed and abiding joys for days to come, let him pray the Lord to make him useful in this world in winning sinners to Jesus Christ, and he will not labour in vain, nor spend his strength for nought, but will find an ample and eternal blessing as the reward of all his godly toil.

I have heard of a gentleman who was once relating to a company of friends an account of an accident which he had witnessed years before, when a stage-coach was overturned into a river, and the passengers were with difficulty delivered from imminent danger and a watery grave. Among them was a man and his wife and their little daughter, all of whom were mercifully preserved, the gentleman who told the story having rescued the child with his own hands. As he related the account, a young lady in the company seemed deeply interested, and as he announced himself as the deliverer of the little girl, she sprang forward to greet him, saying, "*I was that little girl*," and telling him how she had longed to see and thank the unknown preserver of her life.

We cannot well describe the pleasure of such a surprise as this, even in view of a mere temporal deliverance; much less can we portray the deeper gladness of the redeemed of God, when the countless saved ones shall greet the instruments of their salvation in the glory of their eternal home.

The writer remembers with pleasure the greeting of a young man who, at a public gathering, grasped his hand with that peculiar "grip" that none of the dark-lantern "lodges" can ever teach, and claimed his acquaintance. "I do not know you." "No? But I know you; you shook hands with me one day in P——, and looked in my face and asked me if I was a Christian. I never could get rid of that question till I found the Lord." It was a pleasure to see how heartily he entered into the Master's service; and though the occasion and the question had long passed from the writer's mind, yet he could but thank God who had thus used an unworthy servant for the good of a perishing soul. But what tongue can tell the gladness of the glorified, who, when standing amid the shining multitudes of the redeemed, or wandering on the banks of life's fair river, shall start at the vision of some well-remembered face, and rush to grasp the hand that led them first to mercy's altar, and pointed their tearful eyes to behold the Lamb of God who bore the sins of men upon the tree? And such surprises and such greetings will be frequent in that day.

The mother who wept over her godless children till her last tear was shed, and prayed for their salvation till her last prayer was offered, and then lay down to sleep in death, trusting in the promises of a covenant-keeping God, shall then greet her offspring, saved at last, and they shall honour her as they never did before.

The humble teacher who has toiled, and prayed, and lived for God unnoticed and unknown, and who has deemed his station low, and his life almost a failure, shall then meet the saved men and women and children, to whom his life was like the light of a burning lamp in midnight darkness, which led their feet to home, and peace, and joy, and rest.

The little child, whose quiet Christian life has seemed so aimless and so useless, and yet whose humble testimony for God has exhaled from a contrite heart as fragrance rises from a morning flower, shall find with glad surprise some who have been won to Christ by that patient life and quiet testimony, and who shall come with happy greetings to the everlasting meeting on the shining shore.

The minister of God, who in toil and poverty and tears has sown the precious seed of heavenly truth, shall see with joy the garnered harvest in that day, and shall feel with Paul that his bliss will then be complete. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and our joy."

What a day will that be for the servants of the Most High, when they shall gather their flocks to the heavenly fold, and bring their sheaves to the eternal garner! Then those who have traversed the world to bear the message of redemption, shall come home at last to rest in peace. And throngs of blessed ones whom they have begotten in Christ Jesus by the word of truth, shall come to greet them, and hail them as beloved fathers in the gospel of the Son of God! And ever and anon shall come a radiant form, seeking out some glory-crowned labourer who once scattered his tears along his pathway as he came to them with tidings of redeeming love, and bringing others to look upon his face, once so wan and pale and tearful, but now so luminous with peace and joy and immortality, and to give him greeting such as earthly love has never given.

Oh, in that day, when the treasures, and joys, and pomps and splendours, of this world shall pass for ever from our view, when earth shall seem like vanity, and life an idle dream, it will be found that the labourer for God has done a work, and gained a joy, compared with which the noblest works and highest joys of earth are empty, void, and vain. Then, when the folly of the wise, the rich, the ambitious, and the proud, shall be made manifest, it shall be seen that "He that winneth souls is wise;" "For they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Prov. xi. 30; Dan. xii. 3).

Poet's Corner.

BLESSING THE CHILDREN.

"The Master has come over Jordan,"
Said Hannah, the mother, one day;
"And is healing the people who throng Him,
With a touch of His finger, they say.

And now I shall go with the children—
Little Rachel, and Matthew, and John;
I shall carry the baby, Esther,
For the Master to look upon."

The father looked at her kindly;
But shaking his head he smiled:
"Now, who but a doting mother
Would think of a thing so wild?

If the children were tortured by demons,
Or dying of fever 'twere well;
Or had they the taint of the leper,
Like many in Israel."

"Nay, do not hinder me, Nathan;
I feel such burden of care:
If I carry it to the Master,
Perhaps I shall leave it there.

If He lay His hand on the children,
My heart will be lighter, I know;
For a blessing for ever and ever
Will follow them as they go."

So over the hills of Judah,
Along by the vine-rows green,
With Esther asleep on her bosom,
And Rachel her brothers between;

'Mong the people who hung on His teaching,
Or waited His touch and His Word;
Through the row of proud Pharisees sneering;
She pressed to the feet of the Lord.

"Now, why shouldst thou hinder the Master,"
Said Peter, "with children like these?
Seest not that, from morning till evening,
He teacheth and healeth disease?"

Then said Jesus, "Forbid not the children;
Permit them to come unto me:"
And He took in his arms little Esther,
And Rachel He set on His knee.

And the heavy heart of the mother
Was lifted all earth-care above,
As He laid His hands on the brothers,
And blest them with tenderest love;

As He said of the babes in His bosom,
"Of such are the kingdom of heaven:"
And strength for all duty and trial
That hour to her spirit was given.

Teachers' Column.

COLLECTIVE ADDRESSES.

THE true relation of the Sunday School address to the previous instruction is that of a warm, winning, emotional application to a carefully-exact doctrinal exposition. It should not dissipate, much less deaden, the effect of the patient, painstaking teaching of the classes. Whatever of the unavoidable stiffness, hardness, and crabbedness of secular instruction cling about the labours of the Sabbath School teacher should all be swept off by the address, and the last hymn and prayer. "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven," should be the feeling left on the minds of the children. The difference between an address and a lesson—even a gallery-lesson—on the one hand, and a sermon on the other, should never be lost sight of; much less should it be substituted by a lecture, a speech, or a "yarn."

In an address—we will not say, with the French, that the manner is everything; but we will say that—the *spirit* is the main thing. Yet even the manner is of great importance. It is no tautology to say that "a good address" is a very important element of *a good address*. There should be in the speaker's manner nothing constrained, self-conscious, forbidding, ungainly; nothing queer or *quizzable*, provoking mimicry or comic comments by sharp boys or arch girls.

No part of "an address" should be read, unless it be a document of great formality and moment; in which case it should be "presented" first, and then read by the school-secretary. An address is not "a paper." Even the employment of notes is inevitably detrimental to the effect upon the minds and hearts of children.

A *dry*, tedious address—were it not, alas! a rather common thing—would strike one as a contradiction in terms. Liveliness and directness are essential to the effectiveness of an address. For a man to detain jaded teachers, who have to go home and prepare for the Sabbath Evening Service, and impatient scholars longing to be away, whilst he mouths or drones out religious commonplaces, a long-winded lecture, or a piece of stiff sermonising, is a penance which should only be inflicted in correction of some very grave offence.

No ordinary address should be allowed to exceed by so much as five minutes the prescribed time regularly allotted to this part of Sabbath School instruction.

Every address should, of course, be well thought out beforehand. A rambling, slovenly, inconclusive "talkation" is a wanton waste of the precious Sabbath moments, an insult to the teachers and children, and an undoing of much of the good so laboriously effected by the previous instruction.

The power to interest and impress children is a special gift, to be coveted

earnestly, and cultivated carefully, as one of "the best." Every incident likely to awaken attention, and arouse tender, holy feeling, such as the happy death of one of the scholars, should be dwelt upon with a kindly natural earnestness, either by the superintendent or by some one carefully selected by him.

The addresser should always have the grace and courage to stop, the moment he has said all that he has got to say, however soon that comes to pass; and not desecrate the Sabbath by the servile work of hammering away till that which might have been made into a nail is beaten into nothing. Talking against time is neither a work of mercy nor necessity; and is, therefore, a very bad example to set before Sunday scholars.

A knowledge of child-nature, and an interest in child-life, is one of the first qualities in the preparation and delivery of the Sunday School address. It should be always evangelical, even when based upon a passage in the Proverbs; and always practical, even when flowing from a promise in the gospel. Common sayings, again, "their wisdom or their want of it," their true application and their misapplication, might occasionally introduce an animating variety into the subjects of address; but Scripture narratives form an exhaustless treasury of topics for the platform or the desk. In the olden time, when the art of printing was unknown, and copies of the Scripture were consequently scarce, it was deemed the worthy labour of a lifetime to write out, in fair, legible, and even attractively ornate characters, a few copies of the Bible. What a happy, noble life-task to make those children's memories and hearts a sort of pictorial Bible, illustrated and illuminated editions of the Word of God.

It should never be forgotten that a congregation of children is a congregation of critics, unconscious and impartial; critics of the highest order, without conceit or arbitrary rules of judging. You may put off an adult audience by tinsel rhetoric and a well-marshalled pageantry of words; but children must have thoughts, truths. "Bible and *water*" won't do for them; they like the "sincere milk."

Lastly, let no one in addressing children travel out of his own special gift. One great desideratum in Sunday School addresses is *variety*. This will be secured by each successive teacher being *himself*. A respect for one's own individuality is one of the healthiest and the humblest forms of self-respect. Each one shall give an account of his own talents. To attempt to be somebody else is an infringement of a Divine patent, as foolish as it is dishonest.—*Abridged from the Wesleyan Sunday School Magazine.*

POWER OF SYMPATHY.

O YE that are wise in your own conceit! never despise the young; never turn from their first sorrow. Every privation is a step in the ladder of life. Deal gently with them; speak kindly to them. A little sympathy may ensure a great return when you are yourself a second time a child. Comfort them under their little sorrows; cheer their little hearts.

Kind words are the seed sown by the wayside, that bring forth fruit, "some sixtyfold, some an hundredfold." Bear in mind ever that "the child is father to the man;" and when you would pass a sorrowing one coldly by—whether you see it mourning over a dear friend or a lost halfpenny; whether coupled to crime by the iron hand of necessity, or dragged into it by the depraved will of a bad mother, or some other unhappy circumstances—remember that still it is a child, a piece of nature's most flexible wax, and credulous to false prints. Spurn it not because its clothes are rags, or its parents vagrants; it is the mighty, and yet the innocent representative, perhaps, of generations yet unborn. Give it the look of kindness that childhood never

mistakes; speak to it the word of cheer that even old age never forgets.

Do it, if not for the sake of your common nature, do it for the sake of One who said: "Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these, ye did it unto Me." "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Children's Gallery.

THE STOLEN BARROW.

Most Ragged Schools have some plan to help the poor parents as well as their children. First and foremost are Penny Banks and Mothers' Meetings. But, in addition, some Ragged Schools have Blanket Clubs, Shoe Clubs, Coal Clubs, and Burial Clubs. The children, too, have their clubs, often with strange names. Such are Patching Clubs, Sunday Rest Bands, and Bands of Hope. Would you like to know the name of the last new one? It is called an Anti-Swearing Club. We are sure you will wish it success; for the Bible says, "Swear not at all."

The Perkins's Rents Ragged School has a novel scheme to help the costermongers of Westminster. Thus, by the payment of a small sum weekly, or as convenient, they can have the use of a barrow until they have paid its cost price. In some cases this has been the first rise on the ladder of life, and thus the prosperity of these street-hawkers can be traced to this "Barrow Club."

The managers of Perkins's Rents tell the tale of a stolen barrow, and how it was found. We re-tell the story, for it shows the gratitude of the poor men who have been benefited by the club. It also illustrates the old adage, "Where there's a will, there's a way."

About half-past ten one cold snowy night news reached the Club that a holder of a grinder's barrow had been sent home intoxicated in a cab, and minus his barrow. He had been last seen in company with a man of bad repute, who purposed leaving London early next morning. The secretary, accompanied by two members of the Barrow Club, determined to start off at once to save the barrow. Knowing the haunts of the suspected person, they visited numerous places without getting any tidings of the barrow. At length they reached Hammersmith, and entering a court they saw the barrow standing in the yard. Knocking up the man whom they thought had carried it off, he said that he had found it standing without an owner, and had placed it there for safety. The secretary claimed it as the property of the society, and as a policeman was standing by, no opposition was offered, and the barrow was wheeled away in triumph, the persevering men not reaching Westminster till nearly two in the morning, wet and weary. The satisfaction of having done their duty was their only reward.

PRAYING FOR HUNGRY CHILDREN.

I have in mind a little girl of three years, full of life and devotion, never quiet unless listening to a story from mamma's lips, or fast asleep in her cot. She had been in the habit of praying herself for the little hungry children, and her own prayers were very pleasant to her; but the morning prayer of papa was a very tedious thing. To be sure, she knelt, or tried to do so; but her head

was often where her feet should be. It was a matter of doubt whether it was possible for her to be kept quiet. At last it occurred to the father to bring at least a portion of the prayer within the child's capacity.

"Do you want papa to pray for the hungry children?" was asked.

"Oh, yes," came from the eager lips.

"Will you be quiet?"

"Yes, papa;" and the hands were folded at once. At first she listened attentively; but there was no mention of her poor hungry children, and soon the unmeaning words lost their interest, and the restlessness commenced. One would have thought it impossible to regain her attention.

Presently the father began to pray for the hungry children, using the very words of the child. She was on her knees in a moment, her little face turned expectantly to his; and as the words so familiar, "Suffer little children," etc., fell on her ear, the countenance took on a serious look, and the head fell reverently on the clasped hands, motionless until the prayer was ended. As the weeks slipped by, she learned to wait more and more quietly for her part of the prayer, as she called it.

Do *you* ever pray for hungry children?

Correspondence.

BREAKING-IN CLASSES.

SIR,—We read with the greatest interest your Magazine, and many of the hints we have found most useful. Our Ragged School is increasing, and we have 180 names on the Sunday register.

Will you kindly tell me in your Magazine if you approve of a *trial* class. Our late superintendent used to put all fresh arrivals into one class, and make them stay in that class for about two months before they were moved into classes suitable for their age or abilities. Hence the trial class was composed of children of all ages, and some of them could scarcely tell a letter, while others could read pretty well.—I remain, &c.,

Leicester, August 30th. FRANCES MARY.

[The London Ragged Schools have not considered it to be desirable to form separate classes to *break-in* the raw material before they are transferred to classes corresponding to their ages or attainments. Indeed, most of our "roughs" would refuse to enter a class where they would probably be associated with mere infants. Even if they did, the result would be fatal to discipline; for they would only enter it for a "lark," or to annoy, if not corrupt, the younger scholars. Yet, as each Ragged School district has its own special features, plans which prove serviceable in one locality often signally fail in another. It follows from this, that the London rule does not necessarily apply to Leicester; and thus our friends there, who know the nature of their own raw material better than we do, must judge for themselves, and act as their own experience teaches.—ED.]

THE DYING SOLDIER.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

DEAR SIR,—It is an encouragement to the kind supporters of Ragged Schools to hear of genuine results from the efforts put forth in them.

Among the many instances of conversion I have been privileged to see during my two years' labours here is the following:—About six months ago, a discharged soldier (whose brother-in-law had been brought to the Lord through our instrumentality) came from Regent's Park to Virginia Chapel, where we have been temporarily holding our meetings, one Sunday morning, to hear the preaching which had been so blessed to his relative, and the arrow of conviction went to his heart. In the afternoon, myself and several teachers conversed with him, and he professed to yield up to the Saviour, a profession which his subsequent history proved to be genuine. Being then in a consumption, he was only able to come to Bethnal Green once or twice afterwards, the fatigue being too great. At length he took to his bed, when I received a letter thanking me for my interest in his welfare, accompanied by an assurance of his interest in Jesus. About the middle of August he began to sink rapidly, and was literally dying for more than three weeks. During that time I visited him twice, each visit being a season of refreshing to my own soul, and like the vestibule of glory. His pain was intense, but his hope bright and clear. The blood of Jesus was all his hope. A day or two before his death, he sent me a message to say he was holding fast, and waiting for Jesus; a few minutes before his death, in an interval of consciousness, he told his wife he was fighting for the victory. He died on the 11th of September, and on the 18th it was my privilege to conduct his funeral service as a last tribute to his memory, and committed him to the earth in the sure and certain hope of everlasting life.

May he be only one among myriads who shall bless God through eternity for Ragged Schools and Gospel Missions, without whose efforts they might have lived and died unsaved! May the Lord graciously incline the hearts of many more of his people to become their supporters.

I am, &c.,

Old Castle Street Ragged School. WILLIAM JARVIS.

Our Library Table.

The Science of Arithmetic. By Dr. Cornwell and J. G. Fitch. London: Simpkin and Marshall.

THE names of the authors of this treatise are sufficient to indicate that what is done, is well done. It supplies that "missing link" which so often forms a bugbear to learners, especially those who are not gifted with a large organ of "Number," namely, the principle on which the solution of every problem is based. The volume contains many other valuable features, the result probably of the experience which Messrs. Cornwell

and Fitch derived when head teachers at the Borough Road Training School.

Church Progress. Nos. 1 to 6. London: Gardner.

THIS new serial may be regarded as the organ of home mission work in the Church of England, and more especially of that new but important body, the "lay-helpers." As such, it directs attention to the social and spiritual needs of destitute districts, and the best modes of bringing home the gospel to the masses who are now living in practical heathenism. We are quite sure that the separated ministry cannot grasp the work single-handed; and thus, as during the Hebrew dispensation, the Levite is as much required as the priest. We are glad to find that the conductors do not ignore the labours of those who are outside their own branch of the One Church; for they cannot but see that the services of every true-hearted disciple of Christ are needed to cope with the filth and the sin which disgrace our great cities. Written, not by mere amateurs, but by those who are personally engaged in the great work of socialising and saving the masses, the papers are practical and terse. We wish then this new serial all the success it deserves.

Gems of Song. By G. T. Congreve. London: Stock.

THE wise man said that of "making many books there is no end." What he said of books in general, we may now affirm of hymnals in particular. The great distinction between the above selection and others is found in the number of original pieces, and the large number which are derived from American sources. The latter are most suitable for Ragged Schools; for our scholars like *life* in the words they sing, and the more there is of Jesus, the speedier their hearts become warmed. Such hymns, speaking as they do of a present Saviour, also teach powerfully of a present salvation; and hence they have done much to lead our scholars to give their hearts to Jesus.

Notices of Meetings.

LEEDS.

THE friends of the Leeds Ragged and Certified Industrial School recently assembled in annual meeting in the Philosophical Hall. The chairman of the evening was Mr. Darnton Lupton.

Mr. Town was first called upon to read the report:—"The Certified Industrial School commenced the year with 20 voluntary inmates; 52 boys and two girls have been admitted; of these 22 were homeless, seven motherless, 13 fatherless, 19 orphans; 41 could neither read nor write, 11 could read a little. Forty-five boys and two girls have been disposed of as follows:—14 boys and two girls have been restored to friends; 18 boys have obtained situations, eight have been bound apprentices, and *five have left* the town; leaving 27 boys and two girls now in the School. Since the opening of the School 55 voluntary and 33 committed boys have been apprenticed, 79 have done well, five badly, and four have been lost sight of. Such a fact as this best shows what the School is doing. The amount invested in the Yorkshire Penny Savings' Bank on account of apprentice and other boys is £275 19s. 1d. The Day School had an average attendance of 43 inmates and 99 day-scholars. Of the day children now in School only 21 boys and 19 girls were scholars at the close of last year: and when, in addition to the short time that most of them are under instruction, it is stated that out of 389 admissions only five could read fairly, whilst 252 did not know the letters

and 83 the letters only, the difficulties the teachers have to contend with will be better understood, and the progress made by many of the children rendered all the more striking. Twenty-three articles have been paid for and made up by the girls, of the value of £1 14s. 5d.; 98 articles have been made for the School and 219 repaired; sewing and knitting have also been brought from home. Dinner is provided for all the children attending the Day School; and the committee were very thankful for an appropriate grant of soup from the Soup Kitchen in the spring. On Sunday the inmates attend St. Stephen's Church in the morning, and in the afternoon are assembled for School, the instruction being given by voluntary teachers from the Young Men's Christian Institute, with an interest and regularity which call for the warm thanks of the committee. In the evening a simple service is conducted in the school-room, and addresses are delivered by any friends who may be present. This is a most interesting gathering, consisting of the mothers and friends of the children, young men and boys who work in the neighbouring coalpits, besides girls and lesser children, every available seat being usually occupied. Only recently a young man, who was formerly an inmate of the School, but had not been heard of for some years, presented himself at one of these services, and information was gleaned from him respecting two or three old scholars who had been lost sight of. Most of the girls are young and very ignorant, and it will be some time before they will be fitted for service, so that if the Home is to maintain its position, and meet the wants of this interesting but neglected class, increased accommodation must be provided. 648 articles have been made, and 1,197 repaired; the value of the work being estimated at £23 9s. 7d. The committee have endeavoured, in brief, to lay before the friends and supporters of the Schools the statistics and results of the past year, and they claim that the institution has up to the present time fairly fulfilled the object of its establishment. It has been seen that from its humble commencement it has gradually advanced in usefulness and importance, and outgrown even its present extensive premises. From being a Day School for ragged children, it has become a town reformatory for neglected children and embryo criminals, and the additional responsibility of caring for their maintenance and supervision has devolved upon the managers.

The meeting was addressed by Messrs. Wheelhouse, M.P., W. Carter, M.P.; Revs. J. Woodhouse, E. Jackson; Dr. Heaton; Alderman Joy, &c., &c.

STAFFORD.

On Sunday, October 3, Mr. W. Astle, of Wolverhampton, paid a visit to this town, and a meeting was held in the evening for the special benefit of the children of the Ragged School, who, for the last two years, have been gathered in the rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association on Sabbath evenings, that they may hear of Him who came to seek the wandering sheep, to save that which was lost. Living as they do in homes were drunkenness and every form of sin is practised and gloried in, it is small wonder that hardness and indifference should characterise many of them. Of late there have been signs of deepening interest in some of the classes, and on Sunday evening we were permitted to witness such a glorious sight as would make up for years of toil. During the singing of the second hymn, "There is beyond the sky," upwards of forty were weeping and praying, some one or two with moans of anguish painful to listen to. Short addresses were given, and prayer offered by friends who were present, and, as far as practicable, personal conversation was held with any in distress. At the close of the meeting, any wishing further instruction were invited to remain behind, and a large number did so, some of them professing to obtain rest in Jesus.

Papers, Original and Selected.

HOW RAGGED SCHOOLS HELP THE POOR TO SPEND A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

THE season is fast approaching when all will be wishing all a "merry Christmas"—in other words, a cheerful one. And surely at no period is the wish more appropriate than at a time when nearly every section of the visible church is celebrating the birth of our blessed Lord. Divided as many are by ritual, or by dogma, yet in Christ all true disciples find a centre of unity, and in the stable of Bethlehem they readily lay down the weapons of their warfare. There at least they are able to say with the Magi from the east, "worthy is the Lamb to receive power and *riches*." We may well then lay down our minor differences at a season like this, and see in each believer a brother in Christ; and even when we look at those who are outside the pale of the One Church, should we not echo the angels' carol and say, "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace—good will toward men?"

Among the many customs befitting the season, the Christmas hamper has become an institution. By this means family affection is well displayed, and in this way the rich merchant can well show how much he values the services of his dependants. Another custom is that of the "Christmas-box." It is indeed the English form of the cry which greets the Eastern traveller, "Backsheesh, milor, backsheesh!" Though our knocker resounds through "boxing day," few make this demand who have rendered any service for which they have not been already paid—and thus, too often, the "Christmas-box" becomes a tax without any equivalent. Yet still this old custom gives us an opportunity to show how much we appreciate services rendered to us, and which cannot always be rewarded in a more direct way.

But the very worst form in which Christmas festivities are prepared for by the poor, is by the "Goose Clubs," or rather by those "Goose and *Gin* Clubs," which are opened by publicans to entrap the unwary. We can visit few of the byways of London and other great cities without noticing staring bills in the windows of gin-palaces which indicate that, by weekly payments,

the subscribers can have a "fine fat goose" at Christmas, together with a bottle of gin or rum. Not only is this the dearest way of buying the Christmas dinner, but other evils are involved, for the payment of the subscription entails a visit at least once a week to the public-house. Thus the most temperate are tempted to drink a dram for the "good of the house;" whilst to the intemperate it becomes a screen for further draining the glass, which, reversing the line of Cowper, does *not* "cheer," but which *does* "inebriate." This, in fact, supplies the inner motive for the establishment of Christmas clubs by publicans, for they too well know the bait most likely to catch the prey they seek. It is thus shown that the Christmas Goose Club is a fertile cause of that sin which causes so many Englishmen to die the drunkard's death. So this plan, instead of being better, is worse than Christmas-boxes.

Here we may mention that one Ragged School at least has endeavoured to meet the enemy on his own ground, and like Benaiah (2 Sam. xxiii. 21), to slay him with his own weapon. Thus the teachers of Surrey Row, Blackfriars, have started a Christmas Dinner Club, not forgetting to *ex*clude drink, and to *in*clude the ingredients of that Christmas luxury, a plum pudding. We have gladly seen the subscribers flock into the school on Monday evenings with any sum they could contrive to save, from a penny to a glittering sixpence, copper coins of course predominating. By this plan the evils of a peculiarly gin-drinking district are counteracted, and the parents feel that the teachers do not forget that men have bodies as well as souls, and thus, whilst they mainly seek the welfare of the latter, they, like our blessed Lord, remember the former. Nor can we help thinking that amongst the many ways our friends have of helping the poor to pass a happy Christmas, this plan might be well adopted by other Ragged Schools in the autumn of 1870. Such a Christmas Club must begin its operations early in October, and it had best leave the subscribers to choose what fare they please. As the articles would be bought wholesale, the subscribers would have the additional benefit of saving the profit now made by the retailer.

Nor is this the only way Ragged School teachers have of helping others to pass a happy Christmas, and to give something better than a Christmas-box. Thus last Christmas it was our privilege to assist at a dinner given to 500 of the waifs and strays of London. They had all attended the Ragged Church on the previous Lord's day, tickets being given to the most needy of the congregation.

A motley gathering it was, consisting as it did of mendicants, tramps, labourers out of work and out of heart, starving needlewomen, and not a few broken-down tradesmen. Prior to the dinner they had religious addresses, in which they learnt what Christmas really means, and how the poorest and the vilest might become brothers of the babe of Bethlehem. Many other Ragged Schools gave a similar dinner, either on the same day or during the same week. In every case the dinner was paid for by a separate fund. Nor can we doubt that in all these cases the donors and the teachers—all servants for the occasion—relished their own Christmas dinner all the more because they had helped so many of their poorer brethren to spend a happy Christmas.

Another way in which our friends give something better than a Christmas-box, and so help the poor to spend a happy Christmas, is by paying out the accumulated bank money the week before Christmas. There are now 109 of these Penny Banks, with nearly 29,000 depositors. Very pleasant is it to visit our larger Ragged Schools the week before Christmas. The schoolrooms are crowded, and our voluntary bankers have no easy task to calculate the interest due, about one penny in the shilling, and to pay over the accumulated deposits. Happily, as *our* banks never break, the eager depositors never go away without principal or interest. This in many cases is doubtless spent on a Christmas dinner, but in not a few it enables prudent mothers to clothe their children, and thus, like the wise woman of Solomon, "she is not afraid of the snow for her household; for all are clothed with double garments" (Prov. xxxi. 21).

Our ninety Clothing Clubs also help many of our poor friends to spend a happy Christmas. Nor is this a small boon. We are sure that the poor suffer much more physical injury from the want of suitable clothing than is generally supposed. Animal food is rarely found on their tables, and thus, with little fire in the grate, there is scarcely any means of generating animal heat. But not only is animal food wanting, but even the bread is necessarily doled out in too small quantities to keep life much beyond the starvation point. It is therefore needful to supply this want in some way; and though it cannot do all, warm clothing at least does something to develop that animal heat the extinction of which is synonymous with death. To clothe, then, or to well boot the feet, is no slight Christmas boon—and this is done by means of our Clothing Clubs. It is usually at Christmas that these articles

are delivered to the happy recipients. As the articles are bought at wholesale prices, and twopence is usually added to the shilling, the subscribers to our Clothing Clubs derive no small benefit from their existence. Most of the garments are made at the Mothers' Meetings, or by elder girls in Ragged Schools. To these are added old garments, made by skilful needlework to look like new.

The officials of the Ragged School Union gladly add their mite to this way of helping the poor to spend a happy Christmas. Various parcels of clothing, old and new, are sent to our office during the year, from all parts of the country. These are made up into parcels and sent to the most needy Ragged Schools at Christmas. These the paid teachers gladly distribute to the most needy scholars, and thus do their part to add to the general joy.

Other plans, such as Blanket Clubs, Coal Clubs, &c., might be referred to, did space permit, all or any of which we deem the best of all Christmas-boxes. For he is the truest friend of the poor who opens his purse to them in the hour of sickness or infirmity, or who, in the days of health, teaches them how to help themselves.

We should, however, be sorry if such help to our poorer brethren were confined to Christmas, however much befitting that season, from its inclemency and the slackness of work. Let our chief gifts be confined to Christmas if we please, but let it not be forgotten that the "poor we have with us always," and thus our resources should be husbanded for other days beside this, the day of days. So shall we help to shed some rays of sunshine over the pathway of our less favoured brethren, not only at Christmas, but throughout the year. Nor can we doubt that this will have a reflex influence on our own happiness; for the doctrine of our Lord will be illustrated in our own experience, "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

A CURE FOR THE "DUMPS."

BY THE REV. D. F. NEWTON.

In the dumps, are you? What else could you expect? No marvel you are in Doubting Castle so long as you take the easy chair, sleep while angels wake, or sing "Glory! glory!" What is a soldier? what does he enlist for? To slumber at his post; sleep on downy pillows? Up, brother, sister, *up—out!* Put on the whole armour, burnish it with faith and the Holy Spirit, hope and love; out into the battle-field, fight, fight, fight; and our word for it, you are out of dumpings and doubting. "Endure hardness as

good soldiers." "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Did Job, think you, doubt or despond while searching out objects of charity and mercy; when he delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him; when the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him; and when he "caused the widow's heart to sing for joy?" Job was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and the cause he "knew not he searched out."

Did Paul, think you, suffer with doubts, or despondency, while on the wings of love, pouring in the liquid flame of God's truth? Here lies the great secret of warding off Satan's fiery darts; of growing in grace, of holy living.

Beloved, do you wish your light to break forth as the morning, your righteousness to go before you, and the glory of the Lord your rereward? Would you have the Lord guide you continually, satisfy your soul in drought, make fat your bones, cause you to be like a watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters fail not; your peace to flow as a river? Up, and out; "put on the whole armour;" "wash you, make you clean;" "lay aside every weight;" "consider the poor;" "break every yoke;" "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keep yourself unspotted from the world."

"The poor ye have always with you; and whensoever ye will, ye may do them good." In ministering to the poor, you minister to Jesus. "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matt. x. 42). "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (Heb. vi. 10). What saith Jesus to those on his right hand, in Matt. xxv. 34? "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Wherefore?

"I was hungry, and ye gave me meat:
I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink:
I was a stranger, and ye took me in:
I was naked, and ye clothed me:
I was sick, and ye visited me:
I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

SPANISH RAGGED SCHOOLS.

We are glad to find that the Protestants of Spain do not confine themselves to preaching the Word to adults, but are gradually extending their efforts to the young. Though the Schools they have established are known by the name of Mission Schools, they are intended for the same class as frequent those in England. They are also planted in the very midst of the crime gardens of Madrid; and all are very popular with all classes but the priests.

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From a Madrid evangelist we gather the following particulars:—

Mr. K.'s mission-centre in the lowest quarter of Madrid has been signally blessed. Four times a week a Spaniard, full of zeal and faith, preaches the gospel to a most attentive audience of from 200 to 250 people. The Sunday School and the Children's Services are also well attended. A Singing Class, conducted by a Spaniard, on the tonic sol-fa system, is attached to the mission, that the lads and children may learn to sing gospel hymns.

Encouraged by past success, our friend has planted a second Mission-centre in another quarter of the town, where he has secured a room capable of holding 300 people, where he is making a stand for the gospel.

It was in the month of November last year, that *public* services were first held in Madrid; we say public, for though conducted in a private house, they were not, as heretofore, held with closed doors, but were openly advertised by word of mouth. Barely twelve months have passed, and there exists now a church, attended twice every Sunday by 850 to 900 people, on week-days by 450 to 500. There are also three Sunday Schools, attended by 200 children; one Day School, and four Mission-centres, where the gospel is preached both on Sabbath and week-days to nearly 600 people.

Through the influence of a beloved brother—one who has laboured long, wisely, and well for the gospel in Spain, though now laid aside by sickness—the daughter of a godly Spaniard has been led to turn her attention to the work of translating into Spanish, from French and English, tracts suitable for children. God has also raised us up in Madrid a young Spaniard, who has a facility for turning English hymns, &c., into his own language. We have now in Spanish verse some of our standard English hymns, such as "I lay my sins on Jesus," "There is a fountain filled with blood," &c.; while the children have, "That sweet story of old," "Sweet rest in heaven," and "The old, old story." The Spaniards, as a rule, have a great love for poetry, and the facility with which the hymns are committed to memory is surprising. Good seed is being well sown by means of the hymns.

This movement has just been extended to Minorca. It appears that already the number of applicants to attend the Mission School just opened in Mahon, is so great and growing that the managers are erecting a new building at the end of the garden of the gentleman's house who was the first to receive the truth. This will soon be completed, and will serve also on Sundays for meetings—it will seat 500. Some of the scholars go out into the neighbourhood on the Sabbath to read and explain the Word and to pray—showing evidently that God is with us, and pouring upon them the spirit of grace and supplication. Many of them offer themselves willingly for tract distribution through the town, and suffer shame for His name whose they now are. Every night, as they return from the School, they make the streets resound with the lovely hymns they learn, and which are now becoming the popular songs of the poor during their work at shoemaking, as this is the way the majority of the people support themselves, making for exportation.

Need we ask our readers to help this movement, if not by money at least by their prayers? Then will it speedily be said of this land of Mariolatry, what was declared of Corinth to Paul by our Lord, "I have much people in this city."

KAFFIR LAND MISSION SCHOOLS.

An African missionary thus describes a Kraal School in the "Female Missionary Intelligencer:"—

"Scattered here and there, beyond the circle of the mission-house, yet within the missionary's influence, are the villages of the heathen Kaffirs, and among these he finds much of his daily work.

We will visit one of these villages; half an hour's ride will bring us there. It is half-past ten, and the sun is already hot and the air oppressive; but we must not go earlier in the morning, or we should miss our scholars. We arrive at about eleven o'clock; all the village is in a bustle, for the morning's meal is just finished. Some half-dozen of our scholars have seen us coming, and have already taken their places on the ground under the shade of a neighbouring tree. There is no teacher's chair, but a large stone has been placed ready for our convenience. Here we sit down and rest for a few minutes, watching the while the manœuvres of the miniature Kaffirs coming to school. There are the boys creeping out of the door-holes in the beehive houses, dressed in the sheepskins which serve them for blankets at night, and which are put on now in honour of the teacher. They are thrown over one shoulder, and sometimes, though rarely, fastened on the other, and to the wild Kaffir boy are an incumbrance which, in the summer, he will only endure while he is taking his lesson from the white teacher. There are the little girls in blankets, or rather fragments of blankets, fastened tightly round the waist and hanging down to the knees. Some of them have a second piece of blanket tied under their arms, and forming a bag for the little baby Kaffir which is clinging to their backs. There are some very little ones who may be considered well dressed, as they have bead girdles and necklaces, and some of them bracelets. At last all the scholars have come up, and after a good deal of jostling and pushing for places have arranged themselves before us in a semicircle.

Quiet is soon obtained, and we begin by producing the alphabet on a board in large type, to the great delight of the scholars, and proceeded to call out a, e, i, o, u, pointing to the letters, which our pupils repeat after us. As some at least are in earnest, we make progress, notwithstanding the unfavourable diversions which take place when a baby begins to cry, or when boy number one pushes number two, and number two revenges himself on number three, and number four calls out to number five that the bucks are in the garden, and number five whispers to his little brother number six to run, and then number six sees his big brother coming with a stick, and numbers five, six, and seven run off all together to turn the bucks out of the gardens. Then there is a general laugh, and a general movement among all the other numbers till they get into place again.

But notwithstanding these little incidents in school life in a Kaffir kraal, we *do* make some progress. Besides the little ones, some of their fathers and mothers have come to listen and learn with us, and now the letters are put up, and there follows a simple lesson on some first truth, very simple it must be, that both old and young can understand it. So we begin to-day by telling them that "God is in heaven, he is my Father;" and both old and

young repeat this again and again after us. Then we talk to them a little about these simple truths, that they may not only remember the words, but understand and feel what the words mean. Then comes some questions to test their progress.

'Who made all things?' I ask, looking at the most promising pupil for an answer. 'Who made all things?' repeat the whole group together, gravely. 'It is a question I am asking you,' I remark, looking as before to some one who is the most likely to answer. 'It is a question I am asking you,' is repeated by the class. 'You must not repeat my words, you must answer my question.' 'You must not repeat my words, you must answer my question,' is echoed back to us again. We are puzzled, and, unless we have brought with us some school Kaffir, who can stand up in the class and lead the answers, we give up the attempt, hoping for better success in the future. Then, if our pupils show no symptoms of fatigue, a verse of a hymn can be learnt by repetition. We dare not trust ourselves to begin singing with only such raw material as we have at our command, or we should certainly compromise our character as teachers, and be obliged to indulge in a laugh at the ridiculous result of our efforts. Before concluding, however, we may make our little scholars stand up, and covering their faces, repeat slowly after us a prayer, embodying the truth we have been teaching them in our lesson; so we will say together, 'O God, thou hast made all things, thou art my Father, I am thy child; teach me to love thee and obey thee.'

And then our little scholars may go off to play or to work. But we must not leave the village just yet, we have a word for the fathers and mothers of these little ones. Here is one that has a sick child, she wants medicine from us. Here is one that has brought a message from her sick sister, asking us to go and visit her. Here is a heathen man whom we noticed at the service yesterday, and we must stop and ask him what he remembers about it, and give him a word of encouragement to come again. Then there are these two very poor old women, whom we cannot leave without a little piece of tobacco.

And so ends our morning at the Kaffir kraal, and we prepare to return home. We may have done but little, but we know that it is only by thus patiently *doing* and looking for the Divine help and blessing on every day's work that we can accomplish anything; we know, too, that by thus doing and trusting, some have accomplished much."

SPEECH BY SAMUEL SMILES, ESQ., AUTHOR OF "SELF-HELP," ETC., ON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

At the recent annual meeting of the Deptford Ragged School, Mr. S. Smiles, as Chairman, gave the following address on Ragged Schools. He said that—

The operations they had met to encourage and sustain formed part of a great organisation for rescuing a multitude of poor, destitute children from misery and crime. It was a sad fact that in this great city of London, the centre of the world's commerce, and which ought to be the centre of its civilisation,

there was probably a larger number of destitute, ignorant, and depraved—because uncared-for—children than in any other city in the world. Beneath all the brilliant surface which London presents, in its banks, warehouses, shops, rich in gold, silver, and jewels, churches, theatres, dancing-saloons, and gin-palaces, there is a seething, heaving mass of misery and ignorance waiting opportunity to engage in secret crime, or even open outrage.

Some forty years ago, he (Mr. Smiles) had taken an interest in the great Reform Movement. He took then a very sanguine view of things, and, like others equally inexperienced, imagined that "Reform" was all that was needed to make Great Britain as happy and civilised as she was rich and great. O her great "reform" movements had followed, and reforms had been effected, as regarded institutions, and yet here we are deploring the dominion of ignorance, and drunkenness, and crime, and that a large mass of our population is *not* reformed. The maxim attributed to Bacon that "knowledge is power," had also impressed his mind in his younger days, and he had taken part in expounding this doctrine as opportunity offered. He had since been much more deeply impressed with a conviction of the tremendous power of the wickedness that filled gaols, and kept standing armies of soldiers and police afoot, and made people reckless, selfish, cruel, and drunken, and so degraded and demoralised them, that thousands of parents leave their children, destitute and neglected, to the education of the streets and gutters of London.

It was a great thing to say of the London Ragged School Union that it was taking charge of 30,000 of these neglected children, but very distressing that there were many thousands more that could not be overtaken and brought in. The Ragged Schools, with their 3,400 voluntary unpaid teachers, furnished the only means by which these children could receive instruction. It should not be forgotten that they had no endowment whatever, but depended upon voluntary workers and voluntary contributors for their necessary funds.

There were other schools indeed for outcast children (the reformatories), but the entrance to these was through the police office, the prison, or the workhouse. A main object of the Ragged School was to prevent children from becoming criminals or paupers. It might be asked with amazement, "Does not the State—which is society organised—which maintains all these gaols, gaolers, and gaol teachers, provide some education for the neglected children who do not commit crime or get into prison?" None! it leaves them in the streets and gutters, to be gathered together and cared for, if cared for in any degree at all, by the workers in Ragged Schools. But for these Schools thousands of such neglected children would be growing up—thousands of them *are* growing up—as complete savages as are to be found in the centre of Africa—indeed, much worse, because savages polluted by the worst vices of civilisation.

A great public discussion was going on at present about schools for the people; this discussion had been going on at intervals for the last half-century. He earnestly desired that it might now come to a satisfactory practical issue. About twenty years ago he had taken an active interest in this discussion. There were then three great parties—those who demanded a national system of common day-school instruction, provided and maintained by law; those who demanded that the system should be national and that the instruction should be religious, and administered by the religious bodies; and a third party which acknowledged the value and necessity of education, secular and religious, but who held that interference in the matter was foreign to the object and purpose of government. Nothing was then done, and ignorance, barbarism, and crime have of late years been advancing at an even more rapid rate than the admirable efforts and appliances for the better education of the

rising generation. The children of the rich and middle classes are educationally provided for, so, to a great extent, are those of provident working men; but what of the children of the victims of the dram-shop and the beer-shop? they are left to you to educate and rescue from destruction. He (Mr. Smiles) noticed that his friend, the hon. secretary, had announced him as the author of "Self-Help." He had considerable confidence in self-help, and thought it a healthy doctrine to teach young men and women to make the most of the gifts with which God had endowed them, not merely that they might "get on" in life, as some had erroneously represented as the aim he presented, but that they might live useful and honest lives, and build up noble and manly characters. It was worse than mockery, however, to speak of self-help in relation to the destitute, uncared-for children, who were, so to speak, laid at the world's door. These children *you* are mercifully caring for, these you are trying to help, have helped, and a truly noble and Christian work it is. Who does not envy that great-hearted glorious old cobbler of Portsmouth, John Pounds, the pioneer of Ragged Schools? What a picture to see him running about gathering in the little outcasts, tempting them on occasion with a hot potatoe. What a noble personal life's work was his to instruct and reclaim, by his own efforts, no less than 500 outcasts. And further, what an immense result from his example. Finely has Dr. Guthrie said of this noble man and true patriot—"Princes and peers, judges and divines might have stood uncovered in his presence, and marble monuments might well be removed from the walls of Westminster Abbey to make room for his." It may be little that each of us can individually do in the midst of so wide a waste of destitution, misery, and ignorance as the poorer districts of this great city present. Let us each do what we can, and at least try to earn the approving sentence, "They have done what they could."

IRISH MARY.

Irish Mary, as she was called, lived in Chicago. She had become very destitute. Some relief was afforded her from time to time, and she learned the way to the house of the visitor, and often called. The New Testament was read, and "the old, old story." She soon began to comprehend that her wants were more fully met than ever before. "Tell me more about Jesus," was her often repeated request; "I never heard about him before." When invited to go to the Mother's Meeting, her reply was, "Oh, no, I dare not do that; the priest would punish me if I attended Protestant meetings." One Sabbath (New Year's Day) she was invited to call at the house of the visitor to get a New Year's present. After receiving some garments, a new black silk hood, and a cooked chicken for her dinner, she was again invited to go to the Mothers' Meeting. Still she declined, saying, almost with tears, "Ask me anything but that, and I will do it for you." She was then invited to call with the lady on "Irish Maggie."

On asking Maggie if she was going to the Mothers' Meeting, her reply was, "To be sure I am; I've been to mass this morning, and now I am going to Mothers' Meeting." Encouraged by this, Mary wrapped her roast chicken in her apron, and went with them. She enjoyed the meeting very much, singing the chorus of the hymns with much animation.

She afterward told the lady that the priest made her do penance, and she dared not go again. For a long time the lady continued her visits, praying with her and reading the Bible. Finally, light and joy broke in upon her darkened mind.

One day the priest came in, and, announcing the services of Lent, demanded a dollar, saying that masses would be said for her, and all those who could not attend the service at the church.

"Out wid ye," was o d Mary's reply. "Ye come to me when ye want the dollar, and niver when I was sick and suffering. I'd froze and starved to death long ago, if it had not been for the Protestants. I shall not pay you any more money for your prayers: I've learned to pray to Jesus for myself." The priest seemed stunned by this outburst, and left.

A few days after Mary called at the house of the lady, and requested permission to bring in an old, decrepit Catholic, saying, "I've been trying to tell him about Jesus, but you can tell him better than I."

As the result of these earnest and persistent efforts, the attendance upon the Sabbath School reached an average of 1,000, and upon one Sabbath reached 1,382.

RESTED WEARY WORKERS.

NO. IV.

In our February number (p. 30), a proposition from the pen of "A. L. O. E." was inserted, the object of which was to give a week's rest and quiet in a healthy country home to those teachers in Ragged Schools whose mind as well as body needed rest, and whose health required recruiting. Such a home was found in the cottage of a dairyman on Sutton Common, where at a cost of 12s. weekly, board and lodging could be had for one teacher; and at this rate the accommodation could be secured for twenty-four weeks ending in October. The scheme therefore proposed that the best months of the year should be used to benefit both minds and bodies of twenty-four weary workers at the small cost of £14 8s. Towards this sum "A. L. O. E." gave £2 8s., the cost of four visits, besides paying the expense of printing. This was sufficient for a commencement, and as the working out of the details of the scheme was left in the hands of Mr. Gent, the Secretary to the Ragged School Union, that gentleman, aided by Mr. Hytche and Mr. Curtis, the school agents, at once proceeded to carry out the suggestion.

The first difficulty was to make a suitable selection where the field was so wide, but this was lessened by limiting the invitations to—

1. Those most advanced in years.
2. Those longest in the work.
3. Those whose health most needed the rest.
4. Those who could least afford to pay for it.

The invites were given, first, to those who came under all four rules, and then to others who came nearest to them.

It was soon found that, if the fund would permit, two teachers instead of one could be accommodated at the same time, and it was also quickly dis-

covered that the fresh air of Sutton Common and the outdoor exercise had a wonderful effect in quickening the appetite and aiding the digestive organs of the visitors, and to such an extent that the hostess almost came to the conclusion that unless some alteration was made in the tariff of charges she and her family would, by October, be eaten out of house and home. She, therefore, like a wise woman, at once wrote to Mr. Gent and stated her case, not wishing to back out of the engagement, but to be enabled to carry it out to the satisfaction of all concerned. In reply, Mr. Gent told her that he and the friends with him were gratified to find the scheme was working out such beneficial results, and hoped these results would rather increase than diminish, and if the rate of charge for board was below the paying sum she was at liberty to revise it. The result was that for board it was agreed to pay 10s. per week for each visitor instead of 7s., and for two teachers to go at the same time without any increase to the charge for lodging. Under the first engagement one teacher was to have been taken for 12s. weekly for board and lodging, and under the second two teachers were to be taken for 25s. per week, so that the increased cost was only sixpence per week for each person.

The first of the teachers went on March 27th, and with the exception of the month of May, when the cottage was otherwise engaged, the weary workers without intermission occupied it to the 16th of October. During that period forty-six visitors had the benefit of this rest and change of air. At one time it was thought desirable to seek for additional accommodation of a similar character; efforts were made, but without result. Through the kindness of Miss Marsh, two teachers had, at a small cost, the benefit of a week's board and lodging at the Convalescent Home, Black Rock, Brighton.

The proposition at the outset was to benefit twenty-four persons, and now that the scheme has been worked out to the close, it appears that that number has been exactly doubled. This extension of the proposal was warranted by the friends who sent in the money just as it was required. The fund at first proposed was to reach £14 8s., but the thirty-one donors who responded to the appeal more than doubled that amount. No expense was incurred in management or advertisements, so that the whole of the donations were available for the object proposed.

The gratitude expressed by the visitors for the benefits conferred upon them has been uniform and pleasing. As an expression of this feeling to the hostess, a nicely bound volume of Thompson's "Land and the Book" was, after the close of the visits, presented to her, on the fly-leaf of which was written,

"TO MRS. HOWKINS,

As a slight acknowledgment of the Christian kindness shown to each of the many 'weary workers,' while enjoying a weeks 'rest' in her cottage home during the summer of 1869. "JOSEPH G. GENT, Secretary."

Poet's Corner.

THE DAYS ARE GOING BY.

BY GEORGE COOPER.

THERE are lonely hearts to cherish
While the days are going by;
There are weary souls who perish
While the days are going by;
If a smile we can renew,
As our journey we pursue,
O! the good we all may do
While the days are going by.

There's no time for idle scorning
While the days are going by;
Let our face be like the morning
While the days are going by.
O! the world is full of sighs,
Full of sad and weeping eyes,
Help poor fallen men to rise
While the days are going by.

All the loving links that bind us
While the days are going by,
One by one we leave behind us
While the days are going by;
But the seeds of good we sow,
Both in shade and shine will grow,
And will keep our hearts aglow
While the days are going by.

Teachers' Column.

PAID TEACHERS' MEETING.

A MEETING of the masters and mistresses of Ragged Schools was held in Field Lane School on Wednesday, November 3rd. Above 200 were present, including members of the Committee and officials of the Central Society.

Mr. R. Mounstephen presided.

Mr. W. J. Watts introduced the following subject:—

The Teacher's Power in the School: how to increase it religiously and secularly.

I am anxious in opening the question

for this evening's discussion not to produce the impression on the teacher's mind that the Committee of the Union are at all *dissatisfied*, but that the motives prompting the selection of this evening's subject were a further extension of the influence already exerted in our Schools, alike in a religious as in a secular point of view; for no education is worth having, wherever it comes from, unless it be a religious education.

Before we talk of extending influence or power, we must for our own part be satisfied that we have influence over our children—every teacher should, and to my mind undoubtedly has—if not, then a Ragged School teacher is not the proper sphere for such a person to labour in. Such being the case, and the fact admitted that the teacher has influence, how is it to be increased?

Our great Master, when he was upon earth, and desired to teach a great lesson, sat a little child before his disciples. I would desire thus to act in the few remarks I have to offer, and ask you to fix your thoughts upon that child. What a wonderful thing it is! wonderful because its future is entirely enveloped in mystery, and yet its future depends much upon the teacher under whose influence it comes day after day. In that child in after life may be the statesman or philosopher, minister, missionary, merchant, or teacher. I know, alas! that, on the other hand, evil and home influences may gain the ascendancy; but in this case, though the influence be a savour of death unto death, it will tend to the glory of Him who is not only the God of mercy but of justice. The importance of the full power being exerted over the children in our Schools must be patent to all, from the fact that it is the only *proper* education they receive, added to which is the solemn truth that the home influence is quite at variance to school influence. We should follow the example of others, who, when they desire their children to follow any one particular line of conduct, commence their education for it when young. The warrior who delights in war makes the very playthings of the nursery of drums, and mimic guns—he teaches him to handle the little cannon with delight.

The son of Bonaparte was walking his post as sentinel in the ranks of a common soldier at the age of seven; and the father of Hannibal made his son swear on the altars of his gods at the age of twelve, that he would be the enemy of Rome. Thus should the Ragged School teachers' influence be exerted to train the children committed to their care for a more noble fight.

That this influence may be exerted more fully, each teacher should study the temper and habits of his or her children, and bring such lessons before them as will show (without teaching at all) the bad points and sad consequences of evil habits, whatever they may be, and vary their lessons; on the other hand, the good effect arising from the pursuit of habits and indulging in tempers contrary to those followed by the children. While even children do not like to be singled out as bad, they may be often led to chose the right path when the pictures of the consequences of the good and bad are set before them.

The teacher, in order for his power to be increased, must persevere. It is not the work of a day, month, or year—be not daunted with discouragement, but through all persevere, as success can only be attained, especially in Ragged School work, by steady perseverance; results must be left with Him who hath said, "My word shall not return unto me void."

This study of disposition, variety in teaching, and perseverance, must be followed up with constant prayer. Were these points carefully acted upon, they would, in my opinion, be the means, in God's hand, of increasing much the power of the teacher.

The children of our Ragged Schools will be much what teacher makes them, if watched; this influence is exerted even in dress. As the children grow up, the example of teacher is followed in most things, when the scholar, through grace,

is led to follow the good influence exerted in early life.

Mr. A. Bourne, of the British and Foreign School Society, congratulated the teachers present on their engagement in so high and holy a work as that of Ragged School teaching, and referred with approval to the size and arrangement of the room in which the meeting was held. He said he was not there as the advocate of mere secular teaching. On the contrary, he thought no teaching sufficient, even for this life, which was not based on the truths of Scripture and made conducive to the formation of character.

Training, technical education, special instruction, is required for almost all branches of labour, *e.g.*, that of the potter, the cook, and the mechanic. How much more Mr. A. Bourne argued in the case of those who have to mould character, to feed the mind, and to fit an engine of such power for good or evil as a human being for the work of this life.

Any help which the British and Foreign School Society could give teachers in acquiring the art of imparting knowledge and forming character most dexterously, effectively, and in the shortest space of time, would, Mr. A. Bourne assured his hearers, be most readily offered. Three possible methods of assistance were suggested with the object of ascertaining whether any one, and if so which, would be regarded with favour by the teachers present.

1. Teachers proposing to enter on the Ragged School work might be received for three or six months into a training institution, in which the best methods of teaching would be explained and practised.

2. Some teacher of experience might be engaged to assist in the organisation of new schools and the re-formation of those which had gone down, in conjunction with the master of the school, if such could be done without interfering with the master's position among his scholars.

3. Classes might be formed, or lectures given, at some convenient time and place, for the especial benefit of Ragged School teachers.

Mr. Bourne concluded by saying that the Committee of the British and Foreign School Society were simply desirous to hold out a helping hand to those who desired assistance in their arduous work.

Editor's Note-book.

FEVER DENS.

The Vestry of Clerkenwell have lately come to the resolution to demolish the whole of a "property," a block of buildings lying between Fryingpan Alley and Bit Alley, known as "Jack Ketch's Warren." The Sanitary Committee quite agreed with the medical officer and surveyor of the parish, who had condemned the place as unfit for human habitation, and recommended the vestry to demolish the houses, notwithstanding that owners and solicitors to owners had denied the right of the vestry, and had given notice of appeal to the quarter sessions. One member of the vestry declared that the "warren" was composed of pest holes, and a source of trouble for years as a breeding-place of fever. Eventually a delay was obtained for the purpose of seeking counsel's opinion with respect to the powers of the vestry. This opinion was given in favour of the vestry, and orders thereupon issued for the demolition of the "warren."

LONDON WATERBUTTS.

In our volume for 1866 (p. 229) we gave a "Peep into the Waterbutts of Kent Street." We are sorry, however, to record that this evil is unabated; nay, that a glance at the cisterns of Cow Alley reveal still greater abominations. It will be seen from the following sketch that the poor, instead of drinking pure water, really imbibe *poison!*

Dr. Vinen says that, "a large waterbutt in Cow Alley supplies No. 1 and two other houses in Goat Street. In consequence of the butt not being provided with a lid, the water is exposed to the influence of air and light, encouraging the development of animal and vegetable life, as certain effects of water being thus exposed. I exhibited some specimens of confervæ and other vegetable productions found growing in very considerable quantities on the sides of the butt, and also a sample of the water, in which were plainly to be seen fresh-water shrimps, blood-worms, snails, and more minute creatures—the water-flea, cyclops, &c. Small as the water-flea is, its appearance in water implies the presence of other creatures, still more minute than itself, upon which it feeds. This water, in the condition I here describe, so utterly unfit for any domestic purpose, has been constantly used, the larger animal growths being first strained off."

BOY NOVELS.

The following cases will show how many of our popular serials are corrupting youth. From their character, they might properly be entitled, "How to Rob and Escape Library." For as one boy recently said to a magistrate, after being defiled by these satanic tales, "Me and my pals thought doing a burglary a *game* thing!"

But to the last case, if it *is* the *last* case:—

At Bow-street last week a boy named J— M— was charged with stealing a quantity of postage-stamps, the property of his master, Mr. Horace Cox, publisher, in Wellington Street.

Mr. Cox said the prisoner was formerly a very good lad, but had changed for the worse on account of the bad company he had fallen into, and the low style of literature he read. An illustrated periodical entitled, "The Wild Boys of London; or, The Children of Night," was handed to Sir Thomas Henry for his inspection.

Sir Thomas remanded the prisoner for a week, in order to ascertain if there was a vacancy for him at the Feltham Reformatory. The book he said he considered unfit for the perusal of boys.

THIEVES' HOUSES OF CALL.

Mr. Ellison has been engaged at Worship Street police-court with a case that calls the secrets of the thieving profession before the public. About the time the magistrate was disposing of the proprietor of the "Garibaldi," a thieves' beershop in Bethnal Green, Mr. Elliot was punishing the actors of the Milton Hall "penny gaff," near the Elephant and Castle. And in both cases, the punishments which the magistrate was able to inflict fell far short of the gravity of the crime. Not only did R— harbour thieves, but he kept unmarked carts, which he let to robbers, to carry away their plunder! This man has been convicted "about a dozen times," according to the inspector. And yet the heaviest penalty the magistrate could inflict on this trader in theft—who is the constant cause of robberies in every part of London, is a fine of £10, loss of license, and additional penalties of £5 each for the carts.

From the "Garibaldi" we might proceed to the Milton Hall penny gaff, where we shall find juvenile thieves, male and female, enjoying themselves. Like the "Garibaldi," the "penny gaff" is not a

creation of yesterday. They exist in all the poorer neighbourhoods; are known to the police, but are yet suffered to exist. Harbourers of thieves; receivers of stolen goods; stage-managers for pick-pockets and harlots, are traders as well known as any of their respectable neighbours.

With haunts of crime like these, can we wonder that, notwithstanding all Ragged Schools are doing to check juvenile crime, there are now nearly 8,000 persons under twenty years of age incarcerated either in prisons or reformatories in London? Rather could we wonder that, with such terrible incentives to crime, it is not the rule among our juveniles rather than the exception. Is it not clear then, that if Ragged Schools and Refuges were ever needed, the time when they shall close their doors has not yet arrived?

Children's Gallery.

NURSE'S STORY.

"TELL us a new story, nursie," said my little sister one day to our kind nurse, Jessie; "tell us something *true*, and it must be something we have never heard before."

"Something *new* and something *true*," said nurse. "Well, what shall it be?"

"Just wait till I bring my stool," said my little sister; and then she and I both sat down at nursie's feet, and looked up in her face; and if you had seen that dear, sweet little face of my sister's, with her fair brow and lovely blue eyes, you could not have helped loving her, and telling her a story yourself if she asked you!

"Once upon a time," said nurse.

"That is right," whispered my little sister; "I love stories that begin with 'Once upon a time.'"

"Once upon a time," again began nurse, "there was a poor woman who lived in a cottage with her six children. Her husband was dead; so she was a widow, and had nobody to work for her and her children, and she was very poor indeed. They lived in a lonely place in the country. Sometimes she was able to get work in the fields; but it was now winter, and the fields were covered with snow, and it was very cold, and they were brought to great want. They had no coals, but only a fire of sticks, and the sticks were almost all burned. They had had their porridge in the morning, but now it was dinner-time, and there was not a thing for them to eat. The meal was done, and the bread was done, and the potatoes were done, and the very sticks were almost all gone, and not a penny left in the house to buy anything for the poor little children."

"Oh, nurse, what a sad story!" said my little sister, with the tears in her blue eyes. "I am so sorry for the poor children! I would have given them my bread and my dinner, and my little jug too!"

"Well, it was very sad, my dear lamb," said nurse; "but you shall hear. The mother called the eldest boy and girl, and she said to them, 'Now, bairns, ye maun be guid bairns, and tak care o' the wee anes; and just gang awa to the wood, and pick up a wheen sticks to mak up the fire; I canna doubt but what God will provide for us.' So she sent them all out except the youngest, a little girl who was not very strong; and when they were gone, she knelt down, with the child at her side, and the Bible

before her, and she prayed earnestly to God, and told him all her trouble, and how she had nothing to feed her children, and said how he had himself promised to provide for the fatherless and the widow, and he never would forsake those that trusted in him! Then she made her little girl say her prayers, and she opened the Bible, and told her how God had once sent the ravens to feed Elijah his servant, and she said she was quite sure that he would help her, too, in this time of need.

"Just as she was saying this, and wiping her eyes, a shadow passed the cottage window, and a gentle knock was heard at the cottage door. The little girl ran to open it, and in came two young ladies, their cheeks all rosy with their walk through the snow, and the eldest of them carrying a basket in her hand, which she hastened to lay on the table. After kind inquiries as to the children, who were in the habit of attending their Sunday School, the eldest of the two sweet ladies said to the poor woman, 'We were thinking that you would not be very well off in this cold weather, so my sister and I have just brought some things in the basket for you; and here is a little money to help you to get some coals, or anything else you may be in need of, till this severe weather is over, and you can get to your work again.'

"You may fancy how thankful the poor woman was—thankful to the dear ladies, thankful to God who sent them. She sent me out to call the rest of the children home."

"Sent *you* out, nurse?" cried we, both at once, interrupting her.

"I mean she sent the little girl out," said nurse; but we had discovered her story, and she laughed at our eagerness as we cried, "And *you* was the little girl, nursie!"

"Yes, I was the little girl, and the brothers and sisters were my brothers and sisters, and the poor widow was my own dear mother! We lived at the Cleugh then; and see how the Lord heard my mother's prayers—see how he provided for us! I never could forget it, young as I was at that time. We never were so badly off again, for we found kind friends at the house of our good old laird; the young ladies were his daughters, and oh, my dear bairns, the sweet lady who came to help us that day was no other than *your own mamma!*"

By this time my little sister was both laughing and crying, at least the tears were in her eyes at this unexpected end of nursie's story. We hardly waited to thank her, but ran off to our mamma to throw ourselves into her arms and tell her about it, and so we found that this story was not only *new*, but *true*.—*Children's Hour.*

Correspondence.

THE OPEN SPACES QUESTION.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—In your number for November, page 244, you suggest that the disused graveyards of London might be properly employed for the erection of public mortuaries. No one who knows the custom of the poor with respect to their dead relatives can object to this plan, seeing that it would not only prevent disease, but probably save many a valuable life.

But might they not also be properly used as "resting-places" for aged men and women who are past work, and who have few chances of breathing any air but that of their one living and sleeping room? This has been already done with the Marylebone graveyard in Paddington Street, and is about to be done with that of St. John's, Horsely down.

The question seems to be ripening for settlement, and I am glad to see that an effort is being made by the Holborn vestry to promote the same plan of giving an open space for the denizens of the foul courts branching out of Gray's Inn Lane. Thus a meeting, presided over by Mr. Torrens, M.P., considered the means by which an "open space" of three acres in the Gray's Inn Road may be thrown open to the public. The "space" in question is the old burial-ground at Trinity Church, in the thoroughfare named, and which is now surrounded by a high wall, which shuts out all view of this comparatively large piece of land. Mr. Burr, a vestryman, moved a resolution to the effect that it would be a great advantage to the people at large if the St. Andrew's burial-ground in the Gray's Inn Road were thrown open under like regulations to those under which Bunhill Fields ground had been given to the public. Dr. Gibbon was of opinion that the population had a right to the ground, and he advocated its opening on the score of the aid that open space would be to sanitary officers. Now was the time, now this generation was built in with bricks and mortar, to ask that they should be consecrated to the use of the living, to be resting-places where passing travellers might enter and rest. The resolution was carried unanimously, and also one to co-operate with other authorities in carrying out the purpose of the meeting. It was also suggested that Parliament should be asked to give authority for the opening and ornamentation of all graveyards.

By this plan we shall bring the parks to those aged pilgrims who are too old to walk to our parks. Very pleasant will it be to hear them chatting about the "good old times," or to hear those who are true Christians talk of "the land" which to them is *not* "very far off."

I am, &c.,
QUARTUS.

Notices of Meetings.

DEPTFORD.

THE Annual Meeting of the Deptford Ragged School was held in the St. John's Mission Hall, Broadway, on Tuesday evening, the 26th October. The hall was crowded. The chair was occupied by Samuel Smiles, Esq., author of "Self-Help," "Lives of the Engineers," &c.

Mr. W. C. Staines read the report, which maintained that whatever might be the form of legislative action, it was unlikely that the need for Ragged Schools would cease to exist, whilst voluntary effort would probably become expanded. Upon the occasion of the last annual meeting the late Mr. J. J. Lidgett, of Blackheath, presided, and his death was a loss which the Committee much deplored. The long-continued

stagnation in trade, the closing of the dockyard, and the impossibility of obtaining work, had caused many parents who had paid towards their children's education to send them to the Ragged School, which had caused a large influx of scholars, the number being now limited to 180. The distress during the winter months was so fearful that the teachers often found it necessary to feed the children before they attempted to teach them, and the dry bread given them was devoured with eagerness, while their homes when visited presented painful scenes of distress. The average attendance at the Week Evening School has been 63 during the summer months. The Mothers' Meeting, always a valuable adjunct to Ragged School effort, had been well attended, upwards of 80 members being now upon the books. Social meetings had been held, and at one of these sixty poor women testified their regard for Mrs. Croft by presenting her with an elegant card basket and photographs of her fellow-workers. A Maternity Society had been formed, seventeen cases had been relieved, and a considerable sum had been received from the deposits of the women. The children's pence towards their Clothing Fund had also increased, and during the past twelve months 144 articles of the value of £11 were sold at a reduced price. A number of ladies meet monthly for work. Ten of the former scholars had received the Ragged School Union prize for having held their situation with a certified good character for upwards of twelve months. Two other children who had died had given striking evidence of Christian conduct and character. By the kindness of Captain Eardley Wilmott, C.B., they had enjoyed a New Year's dinner at the Royal Victualling Yard. The appeal for this object had been liberally responded to.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. J. Beazley, J. B. Boulton, J. Kessler, J. Pulling, J. Verrall, J. Wigner, &c.

FERDINAND PLACE.

In November, several friends connected with the Ferdinand Place Ragged School met by invitation at the residence of Henry Clarke, Esq., Regent's Park, to make arrangements for the management of the Evening School by voluntary teachers only. The friends came forward, not only out of attachment to the work, but also out of respect to Mr. Provan, the excellent and well-known master of these schools, who has been partially incapacitated for the performance of his many duties by feeble health.

The proportion of teachers to scholars, their appointment to certain classes in harmony with their taste or ability, superintendents for the three evenings, school material, basis of classification, modes of teaching, &c., were methodically discussed and determined on, Mr Clarke taking the initiative, and Rev. Mr. Rowe presiding. Mr. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union, was present.

As a result of this meeting, several friends offered their services, and the Night School will now be conducted by volunteers.

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